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ART. I.—STATE AND PROSPECTS OF IRELAND.

1. *State and Prospects of Ireland.* By Eyre Evans, Esq. Liverpool. 1846.
2. *The Morning Chronicle on the State of Ireland.* November and December 1846.
3. *Mr. Trevelyan's Letter of December 15th, to the Commissioners of Public Works for Ireland.*

WE should scarcely fulfil to the Public the duties of a quarterly Periodical, if we excluded from our pages the subject of Ireland: yet there are many things, in approaching it, which hang so heavy round the heart, that we are ready to drop the pen. Worst of all, perhaps, is the fear that in this, as in so many parallel cases, the current of events will prove too violent and self-willed for control, and that wisdom is not merely impotent, but unseasonable. Before the lines which we write can appear before the public, we know not whether the malady to be dealt with may not have displayed new forms of evil, demanding different treatment from that which we prescribe: yet unhappily, (such is the complication of affairs,) it was never to be expected that the English public would understand, or an English ministry dare to apply, the remedies which are required, until the symptoms were highly alarming. Much progress however has been made in the last year, in convincing an influential minority of the

urgency of the case and establishing its true nature. Whatever are our fears, there is still room for hope; and with a deep sense of the folly of dogmatizing, where the opinions of the most thoughtful are divided, it seems to be incumbent on us to contribute our part towards the general deliberation of the English people, on what is now the first and most vital question of Politics, *How is Ireland to be saved?*

A slight survey of the past should suffice to dispel the fond fancy that things will wear round comfortably without convulsion and without cutting remedies. How far back indeed our retrospect should extend, we know not; perhaps to the hour when Norman adventurers first set foot on Irish ground, and commenced the unwilling union from which Ireland has reaped misery, England weakness and disgrace. The mutual atrocities, which constitute for ages the chief events of Anglo-Irish history, came to a head in the great war of religion more than a century and a half ago. The English had discarded their king, the last of the Stuarts, because he was using the prerogative unconstitutionally against the established Protestant Church. To the Romanist Irish such conduct cannot have seemed very blameable, nor could any one have expected them to submit without a struggle to the superior will of England, and receive for their monarch a Dutchman of whom they knew nothing, except that he had specially been called in as an enemy to their religion. The war was inevitable; but if England could have been wise, its wounds might speedily have closed. Could bigotry possibly do to others as it would be done by, mercy in the hour of victory would have seemed a positive right of the vanquished, whose sole offence was that of adhering to a legitimate king. On the contrary, not only were there sweeping confiscations of estates, but a far more permanent and cruel infliction in the execrable Penal Code. The mischiefs which it worked have not been undone by its repeal. The spirit which originated the Civil War at the beginning of this century was its legitimate offspring; and the same spirit still lives, burning with hatred against England, and grimly waiting for the hour of vengeance.

In such feelings the peasantry at large do not share;

they are too light-hearted and too circumscribed in thought and knowledge to cherish historical enmities: but as they have always found the law to be their oppressor, reverence for law is a sentiment wholly unknown to them; and a secret code of honour has grown up, which leads them to perpetrate murder at the command of an invisible tribunal, with the good conscience of a hangman and the heroism of a soldier. The chief incitement to such deeds is found in the agrarian question. Land being essential to life in that country, to be driven from the land is to be driven to starvation and beggary; and as the peasants know no right by which others than themselves are called *owners* of the soil, they pay rent only by force, and regard ejection as an intolerable cruelty. Moreover, they are not without a traditionary remembrance of the confiscation of the estates, which, truly or falsely, many of them believe to have belonged to their ancestors: and they understand pretty well, *why* it is that there are so many Protestant landlords, as well as why they have a Protestant Church.

What elements of confusion and violence are here! On the one hand, we see active and fierce minds, panting for revolution, democracy, and that elevation which they believe themselves to deserve as well as a Franklin or a Jefferson; on the other, an ignorant, excitable, half-starved populace, long since accustomed to despise the public law, and venerate the command of conspirators. Can any one imagine that when five millions of men are in such a state, we may leave things to the operation of common causes, and expect all to come right? In truth, we are disposed to pardon the ignorant attacks often made on Political Economy, when we hear the language of mere Economists concerning Ireland. We must insist: Ireland has long been suffering under slow fever, *from the wounds of a revolution which never were healed*. No remedies therefore can be effectual but such as will (with more or less plausibility) be called violent, unconstitutional, revolutionary, confiscating, unprincipled. Inequitable and oppressive measures have long since obtained legal sanction, and have not to this hour become less unjust or less oppressive. To give justice to Ireland without offending the claims of the landlords and clergy is as hopeless as to redress the wrongs of slaves without offending their mas-

ters. America well understands that although we could purchase from our West Indians the freedom of hundreds of thousands, there is no one to give compensation for her millions of slaves. Equally is it impossible to give direct satisfaction to the ruling body of the Irish, while rescuing the peasants from their wretched degradation.

In order to see the question from all its sides, it may not be amiss to run over the different remedies which have found advocates. First of all we ought to name *the Orange, Clerical or Protestant view*; which teaches that the cardinal evil of Ireland is Popery, and that the only cure is found in converting the whole land to Protestantism. It is vain to urge upon the partizans of this opinion, that the Irish do not choose to be converted; for this appears to them like saying that a drunkard does not choose to be reformed: they only moralize on the heaven-sent infatuation of a guilty people. It is more to the point to tell them, that, without proselytism, the numbers of the Catholic Irish increase immensely faster than those of the Protestants: the latter therefore must submit to expect that Protestantism will soon be swamped; and if they once hoped that the English would support its supremacy at the cost of civil war, the dullest Orangemen must now have been enlightened by the discussions on the Maynooth Grant. Their business is now to leave religious politics, and do what can be done from other sides. So much to the men: but as to the question itself, it is obvious to remark that no other "Popish" country suffers the same depression and peculiar features of misery and tumult as Ireland; that England, in spite of Popery, grew up and worked on, from the Norman Conquest to the reign of Henry VIII. We are no admirers of Romish religion; but it is an evident calumny to treat this as the one sufficient cause of Irish wretchedness. When Ireland is as happy, and physically as prosperous, as Catholic Belgium, the Rhine, Lombardy, or France, it will then be time to talk of the Catholic religion as impeding any higher advance.

Next to this, and of course in direct contrast to it, is the favourite *Whig theory*, that the grand enemy of Ireland is the Protestant Church Establishment, and that by its abolition or abatement some great and unexplained benefits



would accrue to the poor. It cannot be denied that none but a conquered nation would endure to have its national revenues bestowed on the ministers of a religion to which the people at large are hostile. The Protestant Church is the effect and the symbol of conquest. In so far, it aids to exasperate Ireland, and alienate her from England; and it assuredly will be overthrown, whenever Ireland gains her co-ordinate rights, as a sister country of the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, with deference to our great Whig statesmen, (many of whom have perhaps already learned a new lesson,) it is impossible to believe that the immediate destruction of the Irish Church would in itself have any effect to tranquillize or enrich the people. If tithe were repealed, the landlord alone would reap the benefit; or if the whole revenue of the Church were reserved for the people, it would not suffice even to feed the permanent beggars. To transfer indeed the estates to the Romish clergy, (if such a thing could be contemplated,) would have a tranquillizing tendency, unless it appeared to be extorted by agitation; but this last condition could not be fulfilled; and, in any case, there would still remain mortgaged landlords tied up by entails and very long leases, troublesome middlemen, poor and ignorant farmers, and a starving swarm of conacre-men and cottiers,—indolent, thoughtless, turbulent, lawless; ready tools for faction, riot or revolution.

An actual Whig measure was the enacting of a *Poor Law* for Ireland, some seven or eight years back. Of this it is enough to say, that it has totally failed; yet without it, perhaps, the English Public would never have been satisfied. There would still cleave to us a fond belief, not only that the want of such a protection to the poor had been a main cause of Irish suffering, but that a remedy for it would be found in this quarter. The new law, of course, was borrowed from our own more recent enactments. It was not to be expected that our legislators would inflict upon Ireland a system which we had ourselves been forced to root up as ruinous to industry and morality,—lowering the wages of the hardworking man in order to pamper the indolent, and doling out a slave's allowance to the independent freeman. Nevertheless, strange to say, the minds of some are really running in

this direction, whether they distinctly know it or not. This, in fact, appears to be the upshot of *Mr. Poulett Scrope's* Letters to Lord John Russell. For this gentleman's sincere intentions we have a high respect. We believe that he looks at the great Irish problem with much singleness of mind and true philanthropy; and he deserves credit for the pertinacity with which he has held it up to the view of an unwilling Parliament and nation. At the same time, we doubt whether he distinctly realizes the meaning of his own proposals, if indeed he is altogether consistent with himself. His series of letters (while we write) is as yet unfinished, and we cannot further allude to them than to say that whatever modification his views may receive, whatever explanations he may give, or however ill we may have understood details, a fundamental error seems to us to pervade his main principles, which must be fatal to their success. Disguise it as he may, he desires to feed a nation on public charity. What can be more self-contradictory than this? We have heard of the tall Irishman, who finding his feet to reach beyond his blanket, sought to lengthen it by cutting a piece from the top to sew on to the bottom. This is a true type of every attempt to stay the tide of public beggary, by making the beggars pensioners on the public. The funds which are to support them must necessarily be drawn off from other uses: an army of functionaries is needed for distributing and controlling the public expenditure; the waste is great; work is negligently exacted, or of little profit, however vigorous; the flood of misery swells higher and higher, while the barriers that are to resist it are crumbling away. Indeed, the experience even of the last two or three months might suffice to show how questionable even for temporary purposes is the system of Public Works. It is now notorious that the hopes of next year's crop have been grievously neglected, and that the labourers who are engaged on private estates leave them for the sake of the public employment, calculating on greater indulgence of indolence when no longer subjected to the oversight of a master who will lose by it. As sure as slave work is slacker, and worse done than the work of a freeman, so surely is parish work wasteful and unprofitable; and to prescribe this as a cure for a nation which is overrun with

pauperism, whose indolence and improvidence is almost proverbial, and in which the most distressing feature is their readiness to cast their burden on any one who will be kind enough to bear it,—this, after what we have recently seen, may appear an extraordinary blunder.

Mr. Scrope however has hit upon one point, on which he has encountered a rather tumultuous opposition, with little real argument. He maintains that it is folly to call *want of food* the great disease of Ireland, as long as food is exported. To this it is replied that Polish serfs cannot afford to eat the corn which they raise, or English operatives to wear the cloth which they manufacture. If the alleged parallels rested on truth of fact, they would merely prove that injustice and oppression existed elsewhere no less than in Ireland. Kohl however declares that the serf of Russia or the boor of Hungary lives like a prince in comparison with an Irish peasant; and as for our operatives, the proportion of their own work which they receive as wages is large and constantly on the increase; insomuch that we may safely say,—since the world began, there never was a class of manual labourers who have so great facility of clothing themselves as the workers of the cloth; except where scarcity of food or dearness of rent intercepts the funds which ought to purchase clothes. The Jewish statute which forbids to muzzle the ox which treadeth out the corn, and the apostolic denunciation on defrauding the labourer who had reaped the fields,—appeal to principles as old as heaven and earth, immutable by parliaments or lawyers. The complaint of low wages here takes a form cognizable by morality. A master who produces cotton or woollen stuffs, except when he is himself under oppression, is blameable if his workmen cannot clothe themselves from their own work. While they can get plenty of it, to blame him because they cannot command *other* things, is, *primâ facie*, unplausible: but if their great want is of the very articles which they produce, and those, articles of the first necessity to human life, they are evidently subjected to the grossest injustice; and the fault ostensibly rests on their masters, until these shall explain under what pressure they are themselves suffering. So too when the Irishman's toil produces oats, wheat and barley, and is remunerated by

the free use of a bit of land on "conacre," on which, forsooth, he has the privilege of growing his own potatoes,—the cry of his starvation, we say deliberately, "enters into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth;" and the guilty system, which perpetuates such oppression, will work confusion and immorality, (whatever economists say in its defence,) until sad retaliation comes on a comparatively innocent generation. *Who* is to blame, is quite another question: but when the producers of food see the food, which they need, sent away to another land, there is *some one*, or *some thing*, to blame. If it be not the farmer, nor the middle man, nor the landlord, nor the mortgagee, (each of whom separately the political economist justifies, and perhaps quite rightly,) it only follows that *the whole tenure of property* is to blame. This is a far more fearful conclusion, no doubt, and takes us beyond the economist's science; but it is of no use to blink the matter. Exculpation and recrimination are vain: the mischief exists, and, unless obviated, will bring ruin on the innocent and the guilty alike; it will therefore be wisely amended even by what may seem large sacrifice. Our objection to Mr. Scrope's measure is grounded, not on its general moral aspect, but on its special inadequacy, and even mischievousness; in regard to which, the objections which political economists have to urge, do appear to us to be fatal.

But this leads us to the *remedy of the Economical School*. According to them, the introduction of Capital and Manufactures is to be the panacea, first for Irish poverty, and next for crime and degradation: and it would be unreasonable to doubt, that at some future time much benefit may be gained from this quarter. Yet we cannot overlook the tendency to desire that Ireland may become a second England; which we hold to be a great mistake. Our lowest and unrepresented classes have been variously oppressed by aristocratic and mercantile legislation; nor can we regard the state of the poor in our manufacturing towns with any such complacency as to desire to transplant it across St. George's Channel. We have much to learn, and much to improve. After we have ascertained how our own chief difficulties are to be removed, it will be then time to make ourselves a model for a people so unlike us as the Irish. It should not be forgotten that England

has been very eccentric in her social history. Her people grew up from a state of villeinage into a belief that they were politically free, although the heavy hand of authority continued to mete out their wages and compel their work. They never gained fixed rights in the soil, (without which permanent freedom might have seemed impossible,) and were saved from sinking back into a second serfdom, partly by a traditionary belief in English liberty, and partly by the rise of manufactures and machinery. We give due honour to the service which the last have done; not because an operative population such as that of London, Birmingham, or Manchester, is in a very desirable state, but because there are many far greater depths below them. However, let a man rate as high as he pleases the felicity of an English manufacturing town, it is not the less certain that at present insuperable obstacles present themselves to the introduction of capital and machinery into the worst parts of Ireland. The construction of Railroads may give a temporary, and, we fear, unhealthy, stimulus to the wages market; but when they have been made, will the private capitalist risk his fortune by investing it in places where it is dependent on the caprice of a restless and indolent population? It surely is not needful to argue, that the tranquillization of Ireland,—with an increased respect for property, and for law and for human life, and an increased willingness to undergo continuous labour at the command of a superior,—must *precede* any general introduction of English capital. To this event we might confidently look, *after* peace, contentment and orderly habits should be established; but as no act of the legislature can compel capital to go where it does not choose, its introduction is no more to be regarded as a remedy which can be proposed, than conversion to the Protestant faith.

When the argument is brought to this point, we often meet with persons who seem to lose all patience with the Irish,—and justify themselves in so doing,—their despair venting itself in an invective against *Celtic blood*. As with some it is Popery, so with others it is Original Sin, which dooms the Irish to factious indigence, and exculpates the English nation. The doctrines current in our first historians give plausibility and even an appearance of philosophy

to the self-complacent opinion ; and the speculation creeps in, whether Oliver Cromwell would not have done well by carrying his massacres a little further, and making as short a tale of Irishmen, as we have made of the Tasmanians. There may seem room here for the old Greek proverb,

“ Silly is he, who slays the father and leaves the child ;”

for by our partial severities we have irritated without destroying ; and the Irish, like the Hebrews under Egyptian bondage, worsted in war, have revenged themselves on us by fecundity.\* Yet in truth the confutation of this spurious philosophy is so close at hand, that its professors deserve severe castigation for its heartlessness and stupidity. The Highland Scotch are Celts, closely allied to the Irish, or rather, even in historical record derived from them. The Welsh and Cornishmen and men of Cumberland (not to press other parts of England) are Celts, as nearly related to the Irish as the old Italians to the Greeks, and closer than the Danes to the Germans, according to our best means of research. The mass of the French population is also Celtic, although it is controverted whether the Irish or the Welsh are their nearer relatives. Now when not one of these Celtic nations (whatever *else* in sprightliness, testiness or caprice it may have in common with Ireland) has indolence, barbarism and misery in common, it is unworthy of thoughtful men to impute these evils to Celtic blood as the sufficient and critical cause. Celts may need different treatment from Saxons : let that teach us not to wish to force them into uniformity with ourselves : but let it not make us callous to their sufferings and degradation, as predestined and inevitable.

But it is time to advert to Mr. Eyre Evans's views concerning the disease and the remedy for Ireland. This gentleman in his historical statement goes far more simply and boldly to the root of the evil than is usual among our commercial circles. He concisely recapitulates the conquest of Ireland, and the oppressive enactments which followed it ; and dwells upon the distribution of estates and laws of entail as the real causes of permanent mischief. Absenteeism he regards as only a necessary result, under

\* This is generally ascribed to early and “ improvident ” marriages ; but a part of it at least is due to the chastity which honourably distinguishes both sexes of the poor Irish Catholics, as of the ancient Germans.



the attraction of the English monarchy; and to attribute permanent evils to it (says he), is "to mistake effects for causes," (p. 10). We hardly know how to reconcile this with his reply to the objection, that if entails are the cause of Irish poverty and degradation, England ought to be in an equally miserable condition. He finds "a sufficient answer, in what has been stated of absenteeism; the destructive influence of which is now too universally admitted to require further exposition," (p. 17). If we do not mistake, he must believe, what he barely hints, that the subordinate state of Ireland, as rather a dependency than an integrant part of the monarchy, is a fundamental evil of great magnitude. He develops,—convincingly, as we think,—the unsound principle inherent in entails, and their sinister commercial tendencies; and the general conclusion which he draws, is that *free trade in land is the cure for all abuses of land*; and is a principle of sufficient energy for the relief of Ireland. That it must take time to operate, he does not deny; but, (he remarks,) when in 1832 the abolition of entails had been mooted, a Dublin paper of that day objected, on the ground that Ireland could not wait, and needed a more speedy remedy. Since then, nearly fifteen years, or half a generation, has expired: a period which might have been sufficient to extirpate the worst causes of suffering, which on the contrary have ever since been acquiring increased virulence.

Mr. Eyre Evans, in the course of his argument, touches on so many topics, that in consideration of our limits we must refrain from following him. He propounds, as established truths, doctrines concerning early marriage and rent, which we cannot receive without some modification; and, by inference, he entitles measures "spoliation of the landlords" which the progress of events might lead him to regard as mercy to them and justice to others. But we must address ourselves to his main point,—free trade in land. That this is every way desirable for England and Scotland as well as for Ireland, appears to us too clear and obvious to need proof. If we are not mistaken, many Irish landlords are already beginning to wish for it on economical grounds, however their pride or prejudices may be enlisted on the other side. But the immediate question before us, is, not whether the abolition of entails would be



a fit and important measure, but whether it contains within itself such elements of positive good, that, after accomplishing it, we might wait for the operation of ordinary causes to bring Ireland round from her present ruin. We may concede to Mr. Eyre Evans, that *if* the abolition had been carried in 1832, so great a change might have been effected in this fourteen years, as greatly to clear our present path. But (as he urges himself) the Sybil's books, when once rejected, return the second time with sterner demands; and our prospect is too threatening to allow us to infer, that what once would have been is now an adequate remedy. His aphorism, that "free trade in land is subversive of all abuses in land," is true in long time; and would serve well enough if we could kill off from half to two thirds of the Irish population, and then start afresh with such free trade for the rest. But unhappily, we have to deal at once, both with the appallingly urgent question, how to feed three or four millions of people,—and the equally difficult but less urgent one, how to provide against the recurrence of such calamities. Altogether, Mr. Eyre Evans's conclusions coincide more nearly with those of the mere economical school than we expected from his commencement; and it somewhat surprises us that he does not see more force in the objection to which he has himself given prominence. If entails are in such sense the grand cause of Irish suffering, as alone to call urgently for immediate removal, why is not England equally depressed? He replies, Because Ireland is a dependency, and that causes absenteeism: and England possesses capital, mines, and factories. But why then is not Scotland as badly off as Ireland? and why has *not* Ireland capital, mines and factories? Mr. Eyre Evans has in fact plainly told us why, in the opening of his pamphlet:—*Ireland is a conquered country, and Scotland is not.* It is not from purely anti-economical causes that the disorders of the former country have arisen, and it is only in length of time that a merely well-regulated economy could remove them. Such reforms are most necessary; but no one by itself, we fear, can at present be adequate.

This, however, leads the way to mention another most desirable object, which some have proposed to effect immediately,—the extinction of mortgages. Such encumbrances

on land are to the full as great an impediment as entails, to vigorous cultivation and improvement; and the abolishment of entails would be an essential pre-requisite to the removal of the other burden. The warmest stickler for primogeniture must admit the extreme evil of fixed and large mortgages; and where they exist, it is an intolerable usurpation on the community to allow political power to the nominal and shadowy landlords. In this we find a new argument for an immediate abolition of entails: but, to form a notion as to what would follow from the compulsory and sudden removal of mortgages, it is necessary to set before our eyes some definite outline. To fix ideas, then, let us imagine the following enactments:—"Entail having been abolished, it is ordered that every estate, the average rental of which for the last [7] years, has not exceeded [7] per cent. in relation to the sum for which it is mortgaged, shall become the property of the mortgagees, unless the debt be paid off before [the 1st of July, 1847]: that where the rental exceeds [7], but does not exceed [10] per cent., the time of payment shall be extended to [the 1st of March, 1848]; and where it exceeds [10], but is less than [15] per cent., the debt must be paid off by [the 1st of January, 1849]. No mortgages in future to be lawful, when so large that the rental is less than 15 per cent. of the sum borrowed." As a majority of landlords will need to sell parts of their estate in order to liberate the rest, it is important to assure the purchaser of the validity of his title, and also of his freedom from the claims of the mortgagees; otherwise, there would be an increased difficulty of selling, and greater depreciation. Suppose then (for the landlord's benefit) a declaratory act to remove such doubts: and then, for the mortgagee's security, that the purchaser should be ordered to convey the money directly to the mortgagee, and only the surplus (if any) to the landlord. We inquire, How would such enactments (which are the least exceptionable which we can devise) practically work? Much will depend on the nature of the funds which will be repaid to the mortgagees. We presume that a very large proportion of them consists of money held on trust, and that not much of them belongs to enterprising capitalists, who would be likely to make an active yet prudent use of them when returned on

their hands. The purchase-money for the new estates will certainly not come from Trustees, nor from old ladies, nor from any who desire fixed and small interest without risk and trouble; but from active agriculturists, able and enterprising managers, or speculators of worse and better kind. The capital thus withdrawn from other uses will be seriously missed, and cause stagnation and distress in the money market, unless replaced as fast as it is withdrawn, by the funds which it liberates. On the other hand, if purchasers of the estates are deficient, great depreciation will ensue as the time of payment draws nigh. Indeed, it is to be feared that bidders would, for that reason, purposely hold back; (and this makes it of little avail to give six months or a year more time to the landlord;) and when the depreciation seemed to be reaching its maximum, a rush after the estates would be made, the evil of which needs not to be insisted on. But suppose that early and willing purchasers are found, and that all goes on as smoothly as could be desired; what, at last, would the mortgagees do with their money? Few of them, we fear, would carry it to the markets whence it had been withdrawn. Those of them who are Trustees, would look out for new mortgages: at best, they might be able to take up railway-debentures in Ireland, and so assist a profitable form of public works. To obviate the objections of lawyers to such investment, depending on the wording of old trust-deeds, let it be supposed that a declaratory clause were framed, authorising Trustees, (in spite of prohibitory clauses in the trust,) under certain essential stipulations, to lend their funds on the security of Railway Property. But what of those mortgagees, who are females, professional men, younger sons of families, and other non-commercial persons? These will be generally much embarrassed what to do with their money. Some of them may find at once a good and prudent use of it; many will hold it back and live on the capital, while fearing to employ or lend it: and many will be caught by a thousand bubble schemes which are sure to arise, and will lose or seriously impair it. To lessen one part of the danger, a more minute graduation of estates might be attempted, so as to throw the smallest possible quantity of land on the market at once; yet, as the utility of these artificial

methods essentially depends on the accurate adjustment of figures and dates, it is not wonderful that they seldom succeed. Altogether, to tamper with the market at such a time does appear to us so perilous, that, much as we should value the end aimed at, we dread to buy it at too serious a price. Nor do we know how troublesome would be the new complication arising from the middlemen (whom we have not here noticed); nor again, what proportion of the lands would be bought up by mere speculators, who would mean to hold them only till they could sell again; or by over zealous land-fanciers, who would buy too closely up to their full amount of capital. Such proprietors would be of no greater service to the soil than the present holders, and little fruit would then be reaped from the convulsive process of transference. Looking at all these points, we have not been able to convince ourselves that any *immediate* relief to Ireland can be gained in this quarter. After abolishing entail, we think severe restrictions on *future* mortgages might follow, with *facilities* only for the paying off those which exist, if any can be devised. Perhaps the more deeply mortgaged estates might be forced to commute a part of the mortgage into a terminable annuity: but as we are forced to look on the removal of these burdens as only in distant prospect, we turn away from the subject.

But to what then are we to look for guidance towards a cure? We reply, We must study the course of natural development, under forces which operate on a great scale. A homogeneous population, counted by the million, five-sixths of which is in an unhealthy and dangerous state, cannot be raised except by grand and simple agencies. Such *might* be moral ones. If a great prophet (or one believed to be such) were to win the ears and hearts of Ireland, he might truly regenerate the land: but this lies in the hand of God, and is no matter for deliberation. Such *might* again be economic ones, only by slow steps. Such, finally, *may* be fiercely revolutionary methods. Suppose for a moment that the English people were to take the Irish at their word, and consent to a Repeal of the Union: suppose that after this an agrarian or a religious war broke out, and the English were to preserve a strict neutrality: suppose (what is far from improbable) that all

the horrors of the French revolution were renewed, and that the Catholic democracy were left triumphant: who can doubt that the Irish peasants would become *freeholders*, and that in a single generation they would, like the French, rise to a much higher and better position than that in which the revolution had found them? It cannot be imagined that they would become manufacturers, or in any respect socially like the English operatives or English peasants. A self-developed system would thus cure their present misery, by establishing them as freeholders and lords of the soil. We infer, that our wisdom will consist in aiming at a result as near to this as possible, but without the crimes, agonies and lingering enmities which inhere in a violent and uncontrolled revolution.

But we must digress, to deal with a preliminary objection, common from the mouths of Political Economists. They assure us, that by the known *Laws of Population*, a nation of agricultural freeholders is sure to sink into greater and greater indigence: that their little estates become subdivided to the minimum that will support life: that half the people is oppressed by permanent debt to money-lenders, owing to the intense desire to purchase land: that scientific cultivation and improved tools cannot be used: that, as a general law, large and little properties cannot co-exist; for either the large properties swallow up the little, or the little tear asunder the large: that no middle class would be formed, nor great capital exist: that such a population is peculiarly exposed to sufferings from famine, and is always likely to sink, never to rise, with the progress of time, as their numbers and their helplessness increase. We have not overlooked and do not despise these objections, though we think them in part overcharged, in part false in fact, and in part either here inapplicable or capable of being obviated. We say, here inapplicable; for one might think the objector was unaware that his deplorable picture of what Ireland *would* come to, is not half so bad as the state in which she *already is*. Not estates, but patches of land held at rack-rent or conacre, "*have been reduced to the minimum that will support life:*" the mass of the people *is* "oppressed by permanent debt" to middlemen or landlords: "scientific cultivation" *at present* cannot be used: no "middle class"

of magnitude is formed, nor does "great capital" exist: the population *is* exposed to intense suffering from famine: it *goes on increasing* with great rapidity, and with it helplessness and hopelessness. We might, therefore, safely tell the Malthusian, that the bitterness of death is past. But this is not all. At present, the Irish are a people who have no home on their native soil; who are liable to be cast forth on the highway,\* because their landlord wishes to "improve" his estate; a people who, having found the law to be a stepdame, have no pious attachment to any ideal of a Constitution; who, in consequence, are ready for tumult, innovation and violence, at the excitement of any demagogue. Now supposing that, as little freeholders, they *might* sink to the same level, physically, as that in which they now are; yet, morally, we maintain, they would be far higher, and in every true sense happier and better. Each man would then have that "stake in the country" of which Englishmen talk so much; each would respect property, from feeling the value of his own: each would discern that his indigence was no infliction of his superiors, but rose (if not from his own fault) from the limited fertility of the soil, or from the caprices of the seasons. Suffering would be guarded against by forethought and industry, or endured with resignation, not with stupor or ferocity. In short, if the day on which a man is made a slave takes away half his virtue, the day on which a nation of conacre-men or tenant-cottiers wins the soil as its own, is one in which angels may rejoice.

Besides this, the Malthusian is throughout one-sided, in our judgment. Why is he to assume, that after a generation of quiet, manufactures will not rise in such a nation, as soon as land begins to fail? In France, Switzerland,

\* People ask,—“Why then does no one blame an English landlord for similar conduct?” The question itself is a clue to a large part of the misery of Ireland. That country is in a different stage from England. Her feudal age is not passed. Once upon a time, to “clear” an English estate would have been as calamitous and unrighteous a process as now in Ireland. Besides, our clearances, (when justified by public feeling,) are those of tenants who have failed to pay reasonable rent. But Irish landlords eject men who are in arrears, when the rent is such that debt was inevitable; or again, they “evict” whole villages without reference to solvency, from the abstract desire to lessen the numbers on the estate.



Germany, and even North America, no contemptible commencement has been made of manufacturing industry, although in all these nations the system of small agricultural freeholds is predominant. In Norway, (Mr. Laing tells us,) the consolidation of properties is as common as division, so that the average size of them remains always much the same. We know no reason for imagining, that, if the connection of England and Ireland continues, great properties, and middling ones too, might not co-exist in both countries with an immense extension of little freeholds. If by a magician's wand, one quarter of every landed estate in Ireland were converted into peasant-holdings, we see not the least tendency in this to hinder the owners of the three quarters from cultivating it in pure English fashion, and transmitting it to their eldest sons. Much less do we see how this would lessen any now existing tendency towards the formation of a middle class.—When the follower of Malthus insists on the depths into which freeholders will at length sink, he seems not only to forget how much happiness is first enjoyed, but to wink at the fact, that his master's doctrine applies as much against manufactures and commerce as against small freeholds. It maintains, that *unless population is repressed by prudence*, it will outrun the powers of the soil: but how is this to the purpose, unless it is further shown that prudence as to marriages is less observed by small freeholders than by manufacturing operatives? Now without endeavouring to establish any general rule, obvious cases to the contrary present themselves. No one will think of asserting that, either in marriage or in any part of household economy, an English manufacturing population displays more than a fraction of the prudence of German, Italian or French petty freeholders. We cannot therefore see how "the doctrine of population" at all concerns the present question.

Nothing is further from our intention than to depreciate Political Economy; which we regard as of absolutely first-rate importance to a country in a settled state; where the preliminary questions of Politics have received a practical solution, and where property has assumed a just, yet a complex and artificial character. But Economists damage their own science, when they wish to make it rule beyond



its sphere. It cannot take cognizance of national enmities, of an immoral and demoralizing state of property, and of a thousand passions of the soul, which overpower that tranquil regard for one's own pecuniary welfare, on which alone Economy, as a science, must presume. But of all the topics which it has ventured to treat, there are none on which it has so palpably miscarried as those which directly affect the state of the poor, viz. the Law of Wages, and the Law of Population. Ricardo taught, and all professed Economists for years believed, that (population being given) wages rose and fell in proportion to the price of food. Now that this has been fully confuted by facts, every tyro can see that it amounts to the absurdity of saying, that however short the supply of food, the labourer shall still eat as much as when it was abundant. It is now understood that Ricardo generalized from a narrow observation, made upon a population of virtual serfs; whose food was artificially adjusted under the Old Poor Law. Economists should not forget what evil uses Ricardo's doctrine has served, in discouraging just measures without which the wages of the poor cannot rise. But the errors concerning the law of Population have been to the full as glaring, and yet more shockingly an excuse for hardheartedness. Malthus regarded it as an *axiom*, that what he called "misery" tended to repress the numbers of a community; his three "checks" to population consisting in Prudence, Vice, and Misery. This doctrine having been dressed up in an imposing form by an immense apparatus of historical evidence on the part of the author, and by a scientific and quasi-geometric series of propositions from the able James Mill, became even to kind-hearted or well-meaning persons a justification for the cruel and unrighteous *clearing of estates*,\* by which the Scotch Highlands and Ireland have been scourged. In the hands of more than one Economist the doctrine of Population was a perpetual argument against *every* mea-

\* Sismondi, we believe, declared that the Duke of Sutherland had no more right to drive his tenants off his estates, than any king of France to push his vassals into the sea. Our landlords inherit the rights of the feudal barons; and those certainly were not greater than the rights of a feudal king. Law becomes immoral, when it justifies such proceedings. But people call land "property," and then reason about it as if nobody had rights in it but the (so called) proprietor.

sure which could benefit the lower orders. "If you make them better off," (was the virtual reasoning,) "their numbers will increase rapidly; and then they will be again as badly off as now, perhaps worse; and by reason of their increased numbers, their case will be harder to deal with." It cannot be denied that the effect of this doctrine was, to make men look with apprehension and sorrow at the increase of a population, to fill the imagination with gloomy images, and the heart with despondency. Such a philosophy tends to realize its own sad predictions, by paralyzing benevolent action; like the wizard, a belief in the power of whose curse blights the health and happiness of his victim. A first blow to this theory came from Ireland herself; who exhibited a half-fed population increasing more rapidly than any other in the known world which had no new land to spread over. This showed that the Malthusian word "misery" must be understood in a shocking intensity before his axiom could be physiologically true. It has since been distinctly understood that of the two extremes,—luxurious feeding and semi-starvation,—the former is by far the greater physiological foe to a rapid increase\* of numbers; and some reasoners are now running into an opposite error, by asserting it as a universal law, that a well-fed nation *cannot* increase fast. To these, the United States of America are a confutation. But we have in all this a sufficient warning, how delicate and complicated are the causes,—physical, political, and moral,—which determine whether a nation shall increase, and at what rate. Surely Economists ought not to wish that part of their science which is in so rudimentary a state, to rule in questions of Politics or of Benevolence.

In some able Lectures which were published separately, Professor Lawson of Dublin pointed out other practical flaws in the Malthusian doctrine. If we may venture to present the result of his views as we have translated them for ourselves, it is, that in discussing the difficulty of feed-

\* We believe it is also certain that marriage which is rather late than early tends to produce larger and more vigorous families. Hence another of the Malthusian checks to population, *prudence*, loses no small part of its efficacy. Perhaps it will at length appear that *vice* and *disease* are the only real checks. The large families of the Germans, in Tacitus's opinion, arose from late marriage. *Sera juvenum Venus, eoque inexhausta pubertas*. But perhaps *juvenum* applies to males only, and *sera* does not mean what we call late.

ing a population, Malthus and his followers have attended solely to the producing power of the soil, forgetting to estimate the expense of distribution. Let us neglect to allow for possible advances in scientific cultivation and economy of materials. Compare the Greek colonist on the Dnieper or the Boug, tilling the fairest lands of the Ukraine, with the same Greek at Miletus or Samos: or compare the Scotch agriculturist in the Lothians and in Upper Canada: and it will be seen that whatever may be gained by the greater fertility of the virgin soil, is lost twice over by the difficulties arising from want of roads and distance of markets, in feeding a scattered population. As a result (we apprehend) of this principle, Mr. Lawson contends for it as a fact, that hitherto, in every known nation,\* *the denser the population, the less proportion of its hands have been needed in agriculture.* If the truth of this be admitted, it will follow that no known nation was ever so fully peopled, as not to gain more by economy of distribution (joined with industry) than it lost by the failing powers of the soil; so that it not only never reached the Malthusian goal, but never turned the corner so as to get a distant glimpse of it. Indeed, if we do not mistake, those practical men, who, like Mr. Chadwick, Dr. Southwood Smith, and Dr. Arnott, have peculiarly busied themselves with the inquiry how the state of our lowest classes may be improved,—are more and more brought to a conviction, that the densest population practically known to us affords the greatest economic facilities. Barbarism and immorality, not mere multitude, are the foes so difficult to contend against.

We fully admit that there *is* a limit to the population which the earth can feed; nay, to that which can stand on the surface of the globe. Should our readers be disposed to make the calculation, we think they will find, that if the English people went on increasing at their present rate, supposing all other nations annihilated, their posterity would in less than 1100 years have to stand on one another's heads, allowing that each person needs only one

\* The argument deduced from this fact is incomplete, from a neglect to estimate the proportion of food *imported*, to say nothing of the immensely greater number of hours in the year during which the members of dense communities work.

square foot to stand on. We therefore decline to take advantage of any flaws in Malthus's doctrine about the limited fertility of the soil: we freely admit the utmost which could be fairly deduced, supposing his fundamental view correct. Nevertheless, we assert that as none but a lunatic would abstain from marrying, lest five hundred years hence the earth should be over-peopled, so a lunatic deserves as much attention as the philosopher, who pleads the danger of over-population as a reason against promoting by a particular measure the present welfare of a distressed community. To return to the country in question; Ireland is *not over-peopled*, but her soil is *ill-cultivated*. If the Irish would be indolent when freeholders, we may confidently infer that they are still more indolent and wasteful now; so that without forming high anticipations of advance in their intelligence and industry, we may regard it as indubitable, that the evil feared by the economist would be diminished, and not increased, if the peasantry attained a fixed tenure of their lands.

This digression, though long, has seemed necessary; since, if it were possible plausibly to maintain, as a truth of science, that the end which we propose is intrinsically undesirable, it would be useless to inquire by what means it is to be aimed at. But we proceed to another objection. It may be said by some, who fully estimate the desirableness of our end, that (unhappily) it is unattainable except by violent revolution; that as no nation can be politically free, but by its own activity, or independent of foreigners, but by its own might, so the lower orders of a nation can never rise from the position of serfs or tenant cottiers to that of freeholders, unless they win the result by industry or bravery. We lament to concede that there is much *general truth* in the remark; though, if all history proclaimed it to have been true in the past, that would be no reason against trying to falsify it in the future. Until England had by a single act voluntarily freed her West Indian slaves, history furnished no precedent of such a deed: yet this, happily, did not daunt the spirit of the Abolitionists, and it has been their honour to teach a new lesson on the subject. In the matter before us, however, *we have been forestalled by the Prussians*; and so close at home as this, in very recent times, we have a precedent

forbidding any one to despair on such general grounds. No detailed account, as far as we are aware, exists in our language, of the summary measure by which Von Stein converted into freeholders the degraded masses of the Prussian peasantry. A pamphlet to give information of that remarkable and successful proceeding would at present be extremely well-timed. To the nobility or other landholders it probably appeared an act of spoliation; but if it saved them from the convulsion and destruction which had come upon the French aristocracy, and strengthened the national patriotism, they were great gainers by the measure.

Not that the Irish landholders alone have to make sacrifices, though, for special reasons to be named, it is peculiarly to be called for from them. But England is every year enduring much for their sake. Ireland is very lightly taxed, and is very expensive to govern. We keep on foot large bodies of troops, to defend the persons and the rents of the Irish landholder; and the more disturbed the country becomes, the greater is the demand upon us. Nor is this the worst. Our foreign ill-wishers become bold and aggressive, whenever they hope that we are about to be embroiled with Ireland. As France and Spain made war upon us, *because* the American colonies had revolted, so no one can predict what would now be the conduct of Canada, America, and France, if a civil war were to break out in Ireland. The aspect of the last-named country is more and more threatening. The desire of the farmers and peasantry to possess themselves of arms, is mounting into a passion. Of late, being ourselves in the shop of a London gunsmith, we asked what was the chief market for certain small pistols. He replied, that, shocking as it might seem, they were used by Irish gentlemen *to protect their gun*, while out shooting; for without them, as soon as the gun was discharged, they were liable to be attacked by a man with a bludgeon, in order to wrest away the gun. In short, we believe it is too well attested, that, next to food, arms are becoming the thing most coveted in Ireland. Many of those who are possessed of them may mean to defend their own little properties, and others may have no distinct idea what they are to do with them; but every one must see, with such materials, how dreadful an explosion a spark may cause. What then can the Irish landholders expect

of us? Are we to take on ourselves, for the sake of their rents, an unlimited expense in standing armies, in order to keep down a starving country by force? Will they be satisfied to have the charge of all regiments quartered in Ireland defrayed by a tax on their estates? Do they not know that if a civil war like that of 1801 were to break out, the loss in property (to say nothing of Protestant life) would be most calamitous to them; and the heart-burnings left behind, productive of new troubles, with fresh and fresh depreciation of their estates? And what end *can* there be of this miserable process, until on the one hand revolution sweeps them off and leaves the peasants victorious, or on the other the English parliament enforces a settlement, which shall tranquillize the peasantry? It is surely better to adopt some decisive measure in good time, before the crimes, horrors, danger, loss and permanent mischief of a new civil war surprise us, in which if we conquer we shall be far worse off, and every way more embarrassed, than at present.

These pages are not addressed to Irish landlords, who are not likely to see them; though it is requisite to exhibit the form of the argument as addressed to them. There is however another topic, besides that of danger, which we think is by no means adequately taken into account. The landlords of Ireland, as a class, have by no means equal moral rights in the soil with those of England. *Their right* as towards the peasantry and farmers *is solely that of conquest*. The Edinburgh Review, while stoutly defending "the rights of property" against the confiscating tendency of Mr. Poulett Scrope's proposed Poor Law, makes admissions which prove that in a moral and historical view the (so-called) property has no rights at all. The Irish landowner, they say, has invested no capital in the soil. He has built no farm-houses, dug no ditches, made no roads, set up no fences and gates. His agent makes no deductions from the rent under the name of "outgoings." As the tenant was the first constructor, so he also is the repairer, of every thing constructed or repaired. If Mr. Eyre Evans had duly weighed this point, we hardly think he would speak of tenant-right and fixity of tenure as invasion of the rights of landlords, nor have taken credit to head landlords for the moderation of their rents; nor



would he regard it as a morbid phenomenon in Ireland, that it is there "more discreditable to take a high rent for land, than to exact the highest possible price for the grain or cattle produced from it." What we have stated from the Edinburgh Review of course is not true of every estate; but it characterizes Ireland as a whole: and as war or revolution will not spare the just and humane who are mingled with the less worthy mass, so neither can that legislation, which aims to avert these calamities, except their case from its operation.

When a conquest made by violence has been succeeded by intimate moral and commercial relations between the vanquished and the victors, all trace of the struggle becomes obliterated: but such has not been the case in Ireland. At no one point of time, from the reign of Elizabeth till now, could the Anglo-Irish landlords give to their tenants a better reason *why* the law should enforce the payment of rent and all the other claims of the landholder, than the bare fact of the conquest. It is true that many of the landlords have purchased their estates of certain predecessors; and this brings in the same complication as a system of slavery does. If one planter has bought slaves of another, so much the worse for him if he loses the purchase-money by a revolution or a forced enfranchisement: yet his liability to loss cannot prejudice the rights of the slave to freedom. In one respect the case is not parallel,—and it is an important distinction,—inasmuch as we all know to what each slave is entitled, viz. his personal freedom; but as the individuals whom successive conquest dispossessed are long since dead, no one knows distinctly who is the rightful owner of lands. For this reason (and indeed for every reason) the claims of existing proprietors are to be maintained as fully as the public exigency admits: but when it is most certain that the landholders did not *make* the land, and a general truth that they have not *improved* it, we maintain that (whatever a Court of Law may be forced to pronounce) a Legislator should not forget the moral rights of the tenants and labourers, the actual subduers, improvers, and tillers of the soil. If means can be found of achieving the desired end, while compensating the landowner, so much the better: but the utmost limit of expense which the



imperial government can fitly take on itself, is to be determined by the saving which would accrue to it from the amelioration of so important a part of the United Kingdom. If (for example) it were believed, that by the lessening of the army and the greater productiveness of Irish taxes, the imperial Treasury would be ultimately a million a-year the richer, in consequence of the measure about to be enforced, it would not be extravagant to spend annually another half million in order to effect the change more satisfactorily. But no *compensation* is to be thought of except that which accrues naturally: the very name will otherwise produce endless grumblings and disappointment. The risk, such as it is, of ultimate loss or gain, must be taken up by the Irish landlords, who have most to lose by public convulsion.

What we have just expressed, is no mere sentiment or opinion of our own, but has all the force of a principle deliberately acted on by the British Legislature and the Ministers of the Crown. It is no longer possible to avoid leaving the mere *legal* and investigating the *moral* rights of landlords. A crisis has arrived, at which we are driven off from the ground of prescription on to earlier principles; an undesirable and dangerous contingency, but one which has actually come upon us, and which we cannot evade by dissembling.

Since the day on which Mr. Drummond wrote to inform the Irish landlords that "property has its duties as well as its rights," a rapid progress has been made in the public feeling of England as to the necessity of exacting these duties; and certainly the recent measures of the government, which met with little or no opposition in Parliament, have put forward beyond all mistake the axiom that *Ireland is to feed the Irish*. Nor only so; but as Ireland has only two great classes, those who receive rent of land, and those who pay it, the parliamentary measure has so embodied the principle in action, that we may translate it into, *the Irish landlords are to feed the Irish poor*. "Spoliation" has already commenced, though under deceptive legal colours. Let this Great Fact be duly considered by all who are anxious for the pecuniary interests of the landed gentry of that unfortunate country. Mr. Eyre Evans, with no small reason, deploras their position; con-

sidering that the great landlords or their predecessors have so often let their estates on very long leases, so as to have no control over what is called their property, and no chance of increased rent, that in many cases they actually receive no payment, and yet are expected by the government "to fulfil the duties" of property; which means,—to feed swarms of people for whose presence on the estate they had no responsibility. As for their mortgages, they are certainly not to be blamed. Their predecessors did not choose to give their whole substance to their eldest sons, and leave their other children in indigence; and as the law did not allow them to sell, they of necessity encumbered the property. The repetition of this process, in a few generations, turns the nominal landlord into a shadow; and Mr. Evans correctly deduces that we ought to get rid of this system, and lay the "duties" of property on the real, not on a pseudo-landlord. When he adds, that it is no fault of the present holders that their predecessors had not the foresight, by covenants in their rents, to forbid subletting, we think he cannot mean that any others than the representatives and heirs are to bear the consequences of their want of wisdom. If he will regard it as a concession, we distinctly admit, or rather maintain, that the present government-measures are exceedingly severe upon the landed interests. The *cheapest* way would certainly have been, to let the people starve by thousands or tens of thousands, and pay no heed to their cries, provided that their despair could have been braved, while their strength and spirits were unbroken. Most deeply does it concern us to add, we are far from certain that this would not have involved less suffering to the masses as well as loss to the landlords, than the course which has actually been pursued. Instead of stimulating the peasantry to make unusual exertions to increase their own agriculture, the ministerial measure has practically enticed and encouraged them to abandon it. This was not difficult to foresee. What was to make them plant potatoes, which had failed for two years together, even if they had had any left for seed? Or did any one dream that they would cultivate Jerusalem artichokes, parsnips or other vegetables unknown to them? Evidently nothing but new facilities and inducements, under a stern conviction

that they had no alternative but to plant or to starve, could possibly lead them to make the effort of raising food for themselves. To hold out to them even the *hope* of employment in public works, was at once to ensure the non-cultivation of their patches of land; and, under such circumstances, to employ them on anything else but raising food (or producing what is instantaneously convertible into food) is not only an obvious, but a most calamitous error. Their folly and wickedness in *leaving crops unreaped on the ground* to go after government work, has appeared amazing to many: but we wish to know whether the farmer whose crops they so left, was ready to pay them in money, or only by the loan of a bit of land.—We fear it is now too late to retrace this false step, and after the next harvest it will be no easy matter to get back into the position in which things were last year. The peasants have simultaneously lost confidence in their own agriculture and gained experience that the government will cast on the landlords the responsibility of supporting them. They are to be fed, it seems, at the landlords' expense, whether their work is wanted or not, whether rent is paid to the landlords or not. No limit, that we can see, is set to the demands which are to come on this doomed class, once the fat and flourishing kine, and now to be eaten up by the lean ones, whom they had so long driven off from the grass. Through the neglect of cultivation, next winter must, in all probability, be more destitute than the present. The same argument will recur as is now valid, and will be backed up by precedent,—so important in English politics; and as, without some new, great and decisive measure, enabling and commanding the peasants to feed themselves, there seems no chance of extricating ourselves from the present tangle,—what other prospect have the landlords, but that their estates will be engulfed in one enormous mortgage to the English government?

With their usual recklessness, they aggravated the error which had been committed, and betrayed their belief that repayment would never be exacted of them, by the exaggerated sums which they proposed to grant, and by the utter carelessness often manifested as to the nature of the public works to be executed. Add to this, many landlords, who had previously employed labourers produc-

tively,\* declared that they must discontinue their operations, because the public works, to which they were obliged to contribute, absorbed their capital. *How far* this evil has actually been felt, we do not know; because the minute of the Treasury which allowed of loans for the draining of private estates may, in part, have obviated the difficulty. To complete the hideous spectacle of infatuation trifling with a starving people, several railway companies, which were able of themselves to employ all the labourers of the neighbourhood, have complained that by reason of the preposterous demands of the landholders for the land on which the rails are to rest, they cannot get to work at all.

In regard to the improvement of private land by help of public loans, where this is to be done, not because the proprietor wishes it, but because the government orders it, and prescribes the moment of effecting it; all must see how little chance there is that any proportionately enhanced value will accrue to the estate. Mr. Eyre Evans, commenting on what he understood to be the ministerial scheme for draining lands, remarks, that the landlord is made to pay 85 per cent. of the capital advanced, with only a possibility that the advance of rent may ultimately repay, not himself, but the future possessor of his entailed estate. The calculation is simple. In fact, the result is *less* favourable than this to the landlord; since he has to repay the loan by instalments every half-year; and Mr. Eyre Evans supposes he is to get it at 3½ per cent. instead of 4. This we allow is highly unsatisfactory; yet, it appears to us, there are only two ways in which he can exonerate himself. The one is by granting land in fixed tenure to the labourer, on terms so easy that the rent may be only a fair average return on capital actually spent or an allowance for very superior soil: the other,—if his contract with the middleman hinders this,—to claim that his burden be shared with the middleman. In short, wherever the land has been subjected to (what may be called) a *temporary sale*, depriving the head landlord of his power over it, it does seem to us an inequitable thing to make him responsible for the poor. We should like to see the burthen so shared, as to stimu-

\* If we do not mistake, Lord Monteagle was one who said this publicly.

late the middleman equally with the landlord to bring about a fixed tenure for the cottier or conacre-man. Until this is done, they must, *between them*, submit to the burden of the poor, be it what it may; yet we are bound to use every secondary method of relieving them by opening the labour-market to capitalists, and by energetically repressing all unlawful attempts to cripple industry.

From Mr. Trevelyan's letter of Dec. 15, it appears that ministers are intending to press severely for the instalments when due, and on a second failure of payment to sell up the land even when entailed. In proportion as this shall be carried out, the results will be similar to those which we traced from an attempt suddenly to pay off the mortgages; but they will be far less in extent and intensity. Some, indeed, hope that it will at once bring the waste land into the market and hereby into cultivation. But wastes will often sell only for sporting ground, or be bought by speculators. Moreover, the chief pressure will be on small estates which have no extent of waste; and considering the uncertainties now more than ever hanging over an Irish rental, we fear that when many small properties are suddenly thrown into the market, even the advantage of a parliamentary title will not prevent a great depreciation. The only hope that we see of avoiding this, is, in case the separate tenant-farmers should prove able to buy their farms as freeholds. They would be security to themselves for the payment of rent; and, therefore, could afford to give more than others. Every facility ought surely to be given to such an arrangement.

In any case, the prospect to the existing landowners is so gloomy, that if our own interests were bound up in theirs, we should offer the strongest remonstrances against the present course of proceeding. Kill us not, we would say, by small bleedings; cut off a limb, if so it must be, but let us know at once what is to be the limit of your amputations. Take away at a single stroke one twentieth, one tenth or one fifth of our land: it may be hard to bear; but at least we shall know the worst. Give land to the labourers, and tell *them* to feed *themselves* from it; but to command *us* to feed the millions, whether we want their work or not, is cruelty under the guise of charity. All

that we thus pay, is likely to be pure loss to all parties. If persevered in, the system will certainly ruin *us*, and can bring no permanent good to *them*: on the contrary, it turns the labourers into parasitical paupers, who, after devouring us, must perish themselves.

In contrast to all these schemes of misguided charity, the Morning Chronicle has perseveringly advocated a measure for settling freeholders on the waste lands. As we understand, they wish the government to buy up the lands at their present (or rather past) value. The experience of the Waste Lands Society suffices to show that large tracts may be easily reclaimed: that if certain preliminary operations were performed by a capitalist, the land would readily be bought again in small portions as garden-farms, and would yield a maintenance to the cultivator. In this way, it is maintained, a new area of soil would be brought under cultivation, and a large body of independent freeholders would be formed.—To this scheme we wish all success, and we see not a shadow of ground to doubt that it will be beneficial just in the degree in which it can be carried into effect. But nothing short of trial can ascertain what proportion of the wastes will repay cultivation, and this is a *prima facie* objection against *buying* them with public money: moreover, if an immense area should prove tractable, it is very doubtful how many candidates for such small farms will be found possessed of capital sufficient to buy and enter upon them.\* One thing only is clear to us; that the Irish ought to be made to feed themselves, and not expect to be fed gratis by others; and that the right direction to work in, is, to set them on the land, and say to them, Work at this; and live or die, according as you can make it bear crops or not.

However sanguine we may be concerning the ultimate productiveness of waste lands, it appears impossible to expect that they can effect any speedy increase in the total quantity of food. But that is no objection to an immediate attempt at reclaiming them. For the last three months, labour has been wasted on unproductive works, which might have done much service in this quarter. Ne-

\* When the Morning Chronicle proposes to part with the farms, (1) to those who can afford the fair price, (2) to those who can afford *something*, (3) to the wholly destitute;—we fear the details are impracticable.



vertheless, for *immediate* relief, to enforce cultivation of the old grounds appears of far greater importance than the other object: and we can see no mode of effecting this, without holding out at once a boon and a threat. The boon must consist in some new inducement to agricultural industry, forethought and economy; the threat must be in the fixed refusal to allow public alms.

The moral right of the poor to a legal provision, protecting them from starvation, depends solely on the fact of their being driven by law off the land. Once give them land of their own, and the idea of Poor Laws is absurd; and if even it be burdened with a *small* rent, their claim is exceedingly lessened, and, under the absolute necessity of enforcing cultivation, would be rightly disallowed. On the other hand, no way of relief to the poor is likely to be so little distressing to the present proprietors, as the gift of lands; on which we add certain general considerations.

It is a vulgar error, incident to the present condition of England, to regard land as an article intrinsically of great pecuniary value. On the contrary, land is like water or air. When it is essential to life or to the conducting of business, there is no sum that may not be given for it: hence those who have an artificial and unjust command over it may often extort large prices for the use of it out of the necessities of their fellows. But except where it is peculiarly fertile, its price in the market for the mere sake of cultivation approximates closely to the value of the capital actually invested upon it. Where land adjoining to a cultivated estate has long remained waste, in a well-peopled community, it is generally a fair inference that it is worth\* nothing to a landlord, though it might reimburse a tenant who paid no rent. This is indeed maintained by Mr. Eyre Evans; who finds in it a reason (p. 14) why the gift of waste lands to a peasantry would be absurd and useless to them, and an unwarrantable spoliation of landlords. We draw precisely the reverse inferences. As the land has never yet borne anything to the landlord, nor is likely so to do as far as can be foreseen, to take it from him outright is the least imaginable infliction, and is a very minute spoliation compared with the lightest Poor Law

\* Improvements in agricultural science may of course often interfere with the truth of this statement.



that can be proposed for Ireland. On the other hand, it is notorious that such land is exceedingly coveted by Irish, by Welsh, in fact by every peasantry. Soil which farmers disdain, is laboriously tilled by the members of a cottier family, and will often yield them a happy independence. Until the Irish have had the offer, let no one say that they would not value the gift. Of course there is a limit, where barrenness defeats human industry. Between this and the land actually under cultivation, a considerable portion must exist. The whole of the wastes might, we think, not only with justice but with benefit to the landlords, be resumed by the Government; and after expending upon portions of it the smallest sum which will prepare them for occupants, they might be sold to *bond fide* cottiers for their personal tenancy. So much for the wastes, concerning which we differ from the Morning Chronicle chiefly in not being willing to *pay* the landlords for them: and this, first, because nothing is morally due, and we are at present forced to waive all but moral considerations; secondly, because it would endanger the success of the plan to ask any but very low prices of the cottiers; thirdly, because the very name of compensation would excite inordinate hopes and claims, which could not be fulfilled; lastly, it is certain that large portions of such lands (as mountain tops) could under no case bring any but a fancy-price.\*—Mr. Evans indeed asserts, that all the same ends would be still better served, by allowing the landlords, in spite of entails, to sell these wastes freely in the market. But he brings nothing to prove his assertion. The probability is, that in nine cases out of ten, no purchaser would offer any price worth accepting, unless the land was *first* subdivided and prepared for cottier tenants. This, the present holder might have done long ago, if he had had the will and the capital. Rather than sell it for a trifle, he will retain it for pride and for pleasure. Or again, he may either keep it or sell it for the sake of the game, and it will still remain wild land.

Next, as to the small cottier holdings; which we may

\* It might be proper for the government, after fully ascertaining what tracts could be of no use for the purposes for which the lands are resumed, to restore them to the present proprietors. But to *except* these in the first instance, would cause too much delay.

define as garden ground attached to cottages,—in Ireland named cabins. On these an inordinate rent is very generally set, and much larger than is actually paid. Until the cottier is freed from debt, and subjected to a reasonable rent, it is absurd to expect energetic industry from him; but in any case there should be a maximum sum per acre, never to be exceeded.

It must also be remembered, that unless the rent is very low, we do not get rid of the moral claims of the holder to public relief, and if fresh necessities arise, the present difficulties will recur. To say therefore that he ought to have it *at a farmer's rent* (as the maximum) is erring on the side of partiality to the landlord. To charge a cottier at a greater rate than a farmer, (except so much as may be allowed for increased risk and trouble in collecting,) however it may be disguised, is taking advantage of a man's necessities, and not receiving the fair value of the land:—it is like a shopkeeper asking different prices of different customers:—and when the State is forced to interfere, it should not sanction such extortion.

Not to enter into details as yet, we allege, that such a general arrangement would be one for which the landlord ought to be thankful. First, in proportion to the extent to which it was carried, it would free him from the pressure of paupers: next, it would give hope of increased tranquillity, improved industry and general well-being of the peasants: and in so far as it effected any or all of these objects, it would make the landlord's whole estate more valuable to him: lastly, it would touch only a small fixed fraction of his property, and would assign to that an *equitable* present value.

The peasants who hold land on conacre, remain. This is a system somewhat similar in principle to that which in England is called *truck*. A Devonshire or Herefordshire farmer discharges his men's wages partly by money, but partly also by cider: just so, an Irish farmer, instead of paying all in money, lends his labourers small patches of his farm, which they cultivate for themselves, as of old a West Indian slave his provision-ground. We fear that what is called the "allotment system" in England has a like tendency to lower wages and cast the labourer on the cheapest food.

This moment, however, the Irish system is to a great extent suspended, and thereby increases the existing difficulties. Few labourers could at any time hesitate to accept the money-wages of the Public Works, and live on grain, rather than receive the farmer's miserable wage, eked out by the use of a bit of land to grow potatoes on. But at present they have no choice; for they not only have no confidence in the potato crop, but most of them have no seed, and no stock of food to live on till the harvest; hence they can only work for those farmers who can pay entirely in money. No wonder if the little farmers cry out that they cannot get labourers for the most necessary purposes. Here also perhaps we have an explanation of a fact which has been thought to prove universal rascality in the farmers; viz., that while prices are so high, they pay rents so ill. This may be the case with many; but we can hardly doubt that others are suffering a most unusual drain of money, in paying wages instead of conacre, while the Public Works compete with them, and give prices which are to supply the people in grain-food.

It is just possible that this very conjuncture of affairs may of itself nearly annihilate conacre; to forbid it by law, might chance to aggravate disorder. The prohibition would, we suppose, directly affect the rents of middlemen, to whom the farmers would no longer be able to pay so much, when forced to give money-wages to their labourers; but the loss would reach the head-landlord, if the middleman proved insolvent: and this is perhaps a process already at work. As no cottages are attached to conacre land, it cannot be dealt with in the same way as that of cottiers; and our impression is, that it would be wisest to leave this part of the Irish system untouched, until it appeared what results followed from other changes.

After this preliminary exculpation of our plans from the charge of bearing hard on the landed interest, we proceed, with much diffidence,—because in such details one is peculiarly apt to err from want of statistical knowledge,—to suggest what ought to be done in the present dreadful crisis. THREE objects need to be kept simultaneously in view:—to increase or economise the stock of food;—to free the landlords as quickly as possible from the present

pressure;—to put the labourers in the way of permanent independence.

*To increase or economize the food.* (1.) Every farthing of the four shillings duty on wheat should be forthwith taken off. This is requisite, if it were only as a pledge of earnestness on the part of the government, and as a proof that they understand the awful struggle between life and death which is going on. It cannot be doubted that this four shillings turns away many corn ships from our ports; and when all Ireland is suddenly become a grain-eating nation, and is actually drawing food from England, there is no excuse for keeping up a penny of duty. At least equally essential it is, to abolish the absurd and now suicidal enactment, which forbids foreigners to become carriers to us of food produced in a third country. (2.) Leave should be given to use Sugar for brewing and distillation in place of Grain, without any of the existing limitations. This has been long since advocated by various journals, and the case is so plain, that it is discouraging to find nothing of the sort yet done. (3.) A Queen's Letter should invite the nobility and gentry to hold meetings and form associations, binding themselves to abstain from all wasteful use of esculents in mere appurtenances of luxury, and to enforce all possible economy on their servants. All persons, in any of the three kingdoms, who have gardens, *large or small*, should be urgently entreated to stock them in due season with whatever can be used for food; remembering that next autumn there is little chance of more than a half crop of potatoes, and, whatever the supply from abroad, it will be a hard battle to escape another year of equal suffering. At such a time, every little ornamental garden should be made to yield crops of homely vegetables or grain, and consumption should be the more economized, in order to facilitate the supply of seed. (4.) Landlords should be invited to co-operate voluntarily, in offering land rent-free and seed to labourers, in time to raise an adequate crop before the autumn. (To save a month is here to save a year; and as we write, we know not whether the suggestion can come in time to be worth making.) But every labourer so provided for should be put to the landlord's account,\* as if he had been employed

\* Suppose this labourer needs to receive six shillings a week from the 1st

on the estate: and a labourer to whom such an offer has been made, should have no title to public relief after next autumn, unless he bring proof that the offer was unsuitable, untimely, or inadequate.

*To free the landlords from present pressure.* (1.) It should at once be declared, that the government assumes a title to all lands in Ireland which have remained waste for twenty years preceding Jan. 1st, 1847. With as little delay as possible, wherever Public Works are found to be near enough to cultivable parts of such wastes, the Works should be suspended, and the labourers transferred to the waste land; where they should be occupied in preparing it for tenant cottiers, by draining, by marking out the ground, by erecting the most necessary buildings and forming the roads essential for effective cultivation. (2.) To give the fullest facility to railway-works, a maximum price should be put on the ground needed for their rails and stations; a price, in which no account is taken of the factitious value set on land by the caprice of country-gentlemen; it being understood, that the Stations are not to exceed certain limits, nor to be erected on town-land without special compensation. All railway-companies which have already obtained parliamentary establishment should be authorized to proceed to work at once in any part of their line, without regard to legal technicalities. (3.) Parliamentary precedence should be given to promoters of new railways, fishing companies, or any other schemes which would employ the Irish people. (4.) The wages of the Public Works should be strictly kept a little below the current rate of the neighbourhood, and the full amount of labour which private proprietors would exact, should be rigorously enforced. Nothing but taskwork should be permitted. (5.) The most energetic enactments should be made against those who interfere with the beneficial use of Capital. Our old laws against the combinations called *Strikes* should be revived, experience having proved that the Irish are unripe for a liberty which has borne very mixed fruits even in

of February to the 1st of October; about 34 weeks. The expense is above £10. Suppose the real value of his work to be half of this to the landlord;—quite a large enough allowance, we fear. Then such an arrangement as we imagine, would be equivalent to allowing the landlord £5 for the year's rent and the seed.

England.\* In every case of violence done or threatened with a view to impede labour, the jury-system should be set aside, and the decision of the judge should be formed by the best moral aids, discarding all technical rules about evidence. The best judge, we think, would be a military man, with a lawyer to advise him. When the perpetrator of crime has been undiscovered, the village or neighbourhood should be punished, by a sort of *frankpledge*. The English minister who is to do Ireland good, must be able to despise the outcry of the false patriots, as well as of the gentry: but it is a necessary condition, that in giving increased powers to the executive, the Protestant gentry be not the persons to use them. English or Scotch military officers would, we believe, succeed best. (6.) Any landlord should be at liberty to employ the number of labourers who may be called "his contingent," on his own estate; or, by agreement with his farmers, on their farms, when they complain of inability to find workmen. To facilitate the latter operation is of extreme importance; but where middlemen exist, it becomes complicated. We venture to point to this as an object to be gained, but it needs exact acquaintance with details to suggest the equitable mode of arrangement. (7.) Entails should be at once and entirely abolished in Ireland; with a clause however, to provide, by compromise, for the interests of an heir to an entail, who is already of age, by considerations depending on the market value of the reversion. (8.) The Catholic clergy should be especially called upon, not only to enforce a return to profitable cultivation, but to direct the charity of their people into the channel of providing seed for the next sowing time. The Edinburgh Reviewer of Mr. P. Scrope's letters has suggested the desirableness of *organizing the voluntary alms* of Ireland. None but the priests could do this; and if these were definitely addressed by public authority, their zeal would be called out, more perhaps than by any other imaginable stimulus. (9.) Government should encourage emigration of the destitute to the utmost extent, which the experience of the past suggests as prudent. It is but lately, that in many parts of Australia,—West, South and South East,—the dearth of labourers was great. The pre-

\* Skibbereen, of which we have of late heard accounts so horrible, is one of the places where the people rioted to raise wages a few months back.



sent may be an important time for supplying the deficiency. Nor is it any objection, to say that it is as cheap to bring a year's provision to an Irishman, as to carry the man to the provision: for when carried there, he can do work which abundantly earns the provision; but at home the means are deficient of employing so many at once productively. (10.) Where lands have been held on long lease for more than 14 years, and there is as much as 7 years more to run, and the leaseholder or his predecessor has underlet them, the burden of the poor should (it seems to us) be cast on the underletter, not on the head-landlord. But the middleman should perhaps have the option to throw up his lease, and force the head-landlord to assume his place towards the actual tenants. We make this suggestion with diffidence. (11.) If it appear, that in spite of waste lands and private enterprise and railroads, great numbers still must needs be occupied on *useless* public works,—(works, we mean, which cannot for a length of time repay the community, and which of course will bring no computable benefit to the individual landlords,)—it appears to us so little consonant with justice to continue this pressure on the latter, that we could wish the imperial government at its own expense to begin, at many parts of the United Kingdom at once, various important works which have been long talked of, and ship off labourers and their families in mass to the places in question. Harbours of refuge are not yet made on the scale which is desirable: some thousands might be occupied on these. Nay, in Ireland itself the government might either undertake or aid many great works of real importance, among which we name those which would establish Valentia as the harbour for the American mails. To carry the labourers to the spot, even when it is a little expensive, appears a much cheaper plan than to employ them close at home in doing what is worth nothing.—Nevertheless, we look on all forced operations of this kind as in themselves very bad, though not of all things worst.

Lastly, *to put the labourers in the way of permanent independence*, we believe that it is necessary to grant to the cottiers fixity of tenure. We are aware of the technical difficulties in the way, but we see no moral ones. A certain degree of dictatorial power would be needed in the

commissioners who had to carry the measure into effect : but landlords might be allowed, or rather encouraged, to avoid their disagreeable interposition, by effecting the object themselves beforehand : and we are sanguine enough to hope, that many would think this their cheapest way of disposing of their poor, and that as soon as the plan appeared to succeed, landlords would carry it *beyond* that which the government should have enforced. We have already said, that the middleman should be put under the same inducement as the landlord. To give definiteness to our notions, we will suppose the following resolutions to have the sanction of Parliament. " It is expedient, that that portion of the Irish population which is expected to raise its own food from provision-grounds, should have a fixed tenure of such grounds, subject only to a very reasonable rent.—It is not expedient, that, after they have received such tenure, any claim of support from public funds should be allowed them.—It is expedient to address the Crown to appoint three High Commissioners, with absolute power to bestow Irish land and tenements on peasant cultivators : the restrictions and conditions to be as follows. 1. No man to receive more than [3] acres [Irish], nor less of good land than will yield food for a full-sized family. The Commissioners, as far as possible, to establish each cottier, as proprietor, on the very ground which he had previously tilled for rent. Nevertheless, on the request of the person to whom his quit-rent is to be paid, they may give possession to any other *bonâ fide* labourer, whose industry and fidelity may be more approved. 2. Every man to pay a small fixed rent to the immediate holder of the land, both for the land, and for the house. The land-rent never to exceed [30s.] per acre for the best soil, and to be proportionably lower for inferior soil : this and the house-rent to be settled by the Commissioners on a fair estimate and without appeal. All arrears of rent due from cottiers to be cancelled, when the rent has been set higher to them in past years than this valuation would give. 3. The holder to have a right at any time to convert his tenure into freehold, by redeeming the quit-rent both from the immediate and from the ultimate landlord at a stipulated rate. 4. On no estate is more than [one tenth] of the hitherto cultivated soil to be

thus conferred by the Commissioners. 5. If on any estate, after the passing of this Act, any peasants shall have received tenures of land, fulfilling the objects and conditions here specified, they shall be counted as having had the land from the Commissioners. 6. Cheap and summary tribunals to be established, whereby the quit-rent, when one year in arrear, can be recovered. These courts to consist of persons having no local interest;—and to be empowered, but not commanded, to sell the land for arrears of rent, whenever they judge that perversity or wilful idleness has caused the non-payment. Neither the immediate nor the head-landlord, or their heirs, to be capable of owning the property for at least 20 years to come, and all sales or conveyances of it to them to be null and void, and their money, if paid for that object, forfeited to the receiver. The small estates thus formed, not to be subdivided for at least 100 years;\* and any clause of a will or deed ordering such subdivision, to be null and void, as if never written. Creditors are forewarned, that the land is not available security to them. The new proprietor to have no power to sell it for 20 years from the date of the grant. 7. If the Commissioners report that in any district the new proprietors will be necessarily unable to pay the first year's rent, that rent to be discharged to the landlord from the imperial Treasury. 8. The Commissioners to be persons who do not possess estates or mortgages on Irish soil." Moreover, all legal technicalities should be overruled; a public register made of the lands so granted, which the Commissioners' signature should make valid for all purposes of titles; and evidence to the limits of the small estates should be admitted from the most elementary and least embarrassing process. Future similar grants issuing from the landlords voluntarily for 20 years to come, to be inserted in the same register.

We cannot but believe that such an arrangement would call out the industry of the Irish to an extent quite unknown in their own land hitherto, and would invite the charity of the English also, to furnish the destitute ones with the means of planting various esculents. A single

\* It is objected, that elder brothers will nevertheless *let* whole families of their younger brothers live with them. To this no reply can be given; yet neither does it seem to deserve any.

year would then enormously increase Irish produce. After the first start of improvement, it would become clearer what is to be done with the shoals of beggars, and whether the conacre-system is likely to decrease and vanish of itself. Perhaps the influence of the Catholic clergy might be engaged to divert the alms of the small farmers from the beggars to the Church purse, out of which the aged and disabled should be relieved. If this could be done, a majority of the beggars would before long be taken up anew into the ranks of working men, and Ireland would begin a course in which every year would be more hopeful than the preceding.

Yet we do not conceal from ourselves, that if all were done which we suggest, and done immediately, great difficulties would still remain. How the new proprietors could be fed till their harvest came, (if their usual food has been potatoes, of which they have now no stock,) is a question hard to resolve. For such, no public works would avail which took them far from home, and forced them to neglect the crop; yet in this respect our plan does not increase the existing embarrassment, but simply leaves it as it is. Again, it is hard to foresee whether the little farmer will ever be able to recover the labourer for his service. Even if their confidence in conacre revives, yet he will need to maintain them himself (it would seem) for the first year, which will not facilitate his payment of rent. If, on the contrary, he leaves his fields half cultivated, the evil is doubled. If inordinate rent be that which cripples the farmer, we have a dim hope that the universal inability either to pay both rent and wages, or to pay rent *without* wages, may force the landlords into moderation: for the farmer has little to distrain upon, and to convert him into a pauper will only make the case worse for the rate-payer. We seem to have made numerous suggestions, but we fear they are still too few, and will only move us one step towards so vast an undertaking. We believe that something should be done, as we have hinted, to facilitate or even enforce the liberation of mortgages, as well as the disengagement of long underlettings; but such topics must be postponed. In so universal an embarrassment,—in the crash of a rotten system involving evils so inveterate, so intense and so complicated,—it seems vain to expect that anything but

a series of decisive and persevering, as well as just and considerate measures, can retrieve a fallen country. But unless the pettinesses of law are overruled,—unless the same broad view of public necessities is taken, as every man's common sense dictates in a storm at sea or a fire on land,—unless processes at once speedy and effective are employed, though called despotic, unconstitutional, or confiscating; we shall too late mourn our rulers' incapacity, when confusion, desolation, and crime run riot over one third of the United Kingdom.

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P.S. We have just seen the result of the first meeting of Parliament; and suppose we may regard it as certain that the Corn Laws and Navigation Laws will now at last be put aside, and Sugar for brewing be allowed without restraint. We must be thankful for the boon, however late. We are glad also to find Lord Carew declare positively that the purchase of arms in Ireland has been exaggerated.

*Jan. 20th.*

## ART. II.—MONTE CASSINO.

*Storia della Badia di Monte Cassino di D. Luigi Tosti Casinese. A History of Monte Cassino, with Notes and Documents.* 3 vols. 8vo. Illustrated Edition. Naples : 1842, 1843.

FIFTEEN years have barely elapsed since the heroes of July were heard along the Boulevards, singing confidently in the first flush of victory,

“ Non, non, donnons nous l’ bras,  
Les Jésuites ne reviendront pas ! ”

But the dead alone never return, and Jesuitism is immortal. Behold now all France convulsed at the sight of the resuscitated bugbear :—Zwinglian Switzerland raving and bleeding to ward it off its boundaries ; and Geneva, the old cradle of Calvinism, after in vain exorcising it with provident precepts and precautionary admonitions, resorting to the more carnal arguments of fire and sword, and plunging into a civil war of which Religion is either cause or pretext !

There are those amongst us who would make us equally uneasy about England and her hundreds of Churches. There are Jesuits, we are told, by thousands in this country. We know it. Jesuitism is something manifold, *Protei-form*. It thrives under many a name, many a garb and costume—under broad-brim, surplice and gown. What of that ? England is cased in her panoply of unbounded freedom of inquiry. She lives by it, or is unworthy to live.

England drove out the Jesuits in 1604. All Europe was rid of them in 1767. The Pope disavowed them in 1773 :—and yet, behold them, here and there, and every where ! Where is the good, then, of proscribing edicts ? What can France hope from Papal interference ? Silly forces that have not even the merit of novelty !

From the depth of our heart we pity the people on whom Jesuitism is laid by despotic rule. Maria Louisa, Duchess of Parma, palms it on her subjects, in expiation



of her own sins. In vain do school-boys storm, honest citizens protest, even her Italian Ministers remonstrate. In the Loyola ravens come, croaking, with Austrian bayonets to back them—their broad cloaks screening their patroness's throne, and the stains with which her follies and frailties have soiled it.

These are odious measures—and yet the proscriptions of France and the proceedings of Switzerland are even more illegal—by far more contemptible. In countries blessed with freedom of discussion, an appeal to force betrays the impotence of all other arguments. The University of Paris cannot confute the Jesuits without the authority of Gregory XVI.! A Papal Bull and not the *Charte* is now the palladium of the liberties of France! These *faux-pas*, and these alone, satisfy us of the real progress of Jesuitism on the Continent; and, until England is driven by idle fears to similar resources, we are in no dread of Monkhood and Popery. Convents and nunneries, we are told, are rising on every side about us. The College at Stonyhurst numbers above 500 students. Very true, perhaps, very melancholy! But would any violent measure cure a few enthusiasts of their delusion? The Yankee republicans tried it. Set up by a fire-and-brimstone *Orthodox* preacher, the Boston Puritans made a bonfire of the Cloister at Mount Benedict, and spirited away the nuns in their night-gown and slippers, driving them all over the country. What was the result? More than thirty-one convents, male and female, are now flourishing in Yankee-Land: even to say nothing of the Shakers' establishments, promiscuous monasteries for both sexes,—a refinement upon the ancient *cenobium*, where the sanctity of the recluse is put to the test of constant, immediate temptation.

There is in man an innate, deep-seated, ineradicable tendency to insanity. How many years is it since Lorenzo de Medici pointed to the Convent as the Lunatic Asylum of a Christian community? How long since a German Monk turned his back upon his cloistered prison; and, Samson-like, carried its iron gates along with it?

Insanity is but indifferently cured by the horse-whip and straight-jacket. Error must be reasoned out of man,

be he never so stubborn and idiotic. In the face of ranting alarmists and no-popery terrorists, we are still for universal, unlimited toleration. It is the wadded cuirass against which the shafts of bigotry are sooner blunted than against the rigid but brittle shield of persecution.

Toleration, we said, not concession. We would not so far befriend Monkhood, and that most unamiable, most dangerous system of Monkhood—Jesuitism, as to build up its convents or endow its seminaries. But fair-play should be allowed even to the most detestable foe.

“Ragioni, ov'ei pur n'abbia, sponga.”

No war between us but of words.

It is with these views we have taken up this Monkish book—a monkish history of the most ancient and renowned religious community—the cradle of monachism. We have all heard, we are all disposed in favour, of Monte Cassino. The Benedictines were gentlemen-monks. They never were looked upon with the feelings of mistrust or hatred that fell to the share of the bloody-minded Dominicans, or more ambitious Jesuits. The past is considerably to their credit. The world has done justice to their refined, scholarly habits. Whether by-gone greatness and usefulness may be raised into a plea for their present continuance, is a question of a different nature—a question into which we think it would be idle to enter. It is only the past that interests us. A review of their sayings and doings in more benighted ages will enable us to judge of the validity of their claims to our gratitude. Our sympathy for the order will be commensurate to our knowledge of our obligations:—and for our estimate of facts, for the amount of the beneficial influence of the order of St. Benedict, on the cause of civilisation and literature, we will even take the words of a Benedictine, abide by the authority of Don Luigi Tosti, himself a Cassinese, a member, obviously a panegyrist, of the Order.

Benedict of Norcia, begins our chronicler, born in 480, early in life made aware of the vanities of this naughty world, and following the dictates of that best part of valour, discretion—turned his back upon the

enemy and sought his refuge in a lonely cave on the hills of Subiaco. The odour of his sanctity spread abroad, and the inmates of an adjoining monastery, in an evil hour for both parties, laid their abbatial mitre at the feet of the reluctant solitary.

The monks, however,—good easy souls,—were ill-fitted for the tight rule of a saint. They plotted against him—spiced his *soupe-maigre* for him. Their fiendish desires were, however, baffled by the powers above. At one sign of the cross, the poisoned bason was shivered to atoms, as if it had been made of the far-famed Venetian glass of olden times. Benedict made his escape from these cowed murderers, and shook the dust from his sandals on their sacrilegious threshold.

New penitents soon after flocked around him in his den. They clustered together; they organized themselves into new religious communities; no less than twelve of which, all in the same region of Subiaco, acknowledged his rule.

These holy fraternities, however, could not thrive without the ill-will of rival establishments. A priest, by name Florentio, whose church waxed thin and cold from lack of customers, vowed vengeance against the Benedictines and their inoffensive Archymandrite. Arsenic, it was well proved, would be out of the question: but the minds of the disciples were not, perhaps, as thoroughly proof against poison as the body of the master. One fair summer-day, the Demon-priest led a bevy of blooming Houris, picked among the courtezans of Rome, to revel and carol on the green, before the cloister gates. There was an instant rush from the choir—and the discomfited saint found himself nearly alone in his holiness; and with no more than two followers went forth a wanderer over the land.

Led by two angels, or induced by the donation of Tertullus, a Roman senator, Benedict took up his quarters near the old town of Cassino, in *Compania*, together with his two disciples, Mauro and Placido, who became in their turn pillars of the Order, founders of new houses, and saints. Here he laid the foundation of the abbey on the summit of a hill, in 529.

Anything more meek and humane, more rational and

liberal than the Benedictine rule, as laid down by the holy founder of the Order, could not, in those days of ignorance, be imagined. The cloisters were a refuge, and no prison. The monks made vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience; but these vows were neither perpetual nor irrevocable. The portals of the monastery were indiscriminately open to all applicants, independent of age and rank. The dress, food, and tenor of life of the monks, were free from the rigour of oriental asceticism. Labour, study, and the duties of hospitality, together with prayers and psalm-singing, constituted the daily routine of the house.

With the exception of the costume, of the weight of bread and measure of wine—in short, of the outward seeming—none of the fundamental rules were literally complied with by the aristocratic disciples of Benedict, in after ages.

Benedict himself achieved but little worthy of note, after thus laying the corner-stone of the Order. His sister, Scholastica, also built a nunnery somewhere at the foot of the hill, and an almost daily intercourse was established between the two saints to their dying day. So great was the comfort the pious woman derived from her brother's exhortations, that she often urged him to prolong his stay after sunset, and "make a night of it." And because the saint pleaded the rules of his Order, (his own rules forbidding his absence from home by night,) the good sister, who had her own share of the family knack of miracle-making, called down such a rain and thunder-storm by her prayers, that the holy abbot was fain to shelter his head under the slate roof of the nunnery; the war of the elements thus empowering Scholastica to have her own way, of which, saint as she was, she appeared to be as fond as any of the more erring daughters of Eve.

The year, day, and even hour of his death, were, as a matter of course, prophetically appointed by Benedict: neither did he fail, with equal accuracy, to warn his brethren of impending calamities,—the destruction of the abbey and dispersion of the flock,—events which came to pass in 589, five-and-forty years after the decease of the saint. Southern Italy was in that year invaded by a Lombard detachment, whose leader, Zotto, the first Duke

of Beneventum, a Pagan or a heretic, no matter which, drove the monks from their cells, and levelled the abbey with the ground.

The fugitive monks found a refuge at Rome, under the patronage of Pope Pelagius, who built them a home near the Lateran, and there lodged and boarded them for 130 years.

It was from amongst these Cassinese refugees (our monk asserts) that Pope Gregory selected his apostles of the Gospel for England. The mission took place under the Abbot Valentinian, successor to Bonito.

According to this tradition, then, Augustin and his forty monks were Benedictines. Why, in that case, the Augustinians should, in after ages, have been like cat and dog with the parent order, might, perhaps, be a matter for curious speculation.

Meanwhile, the day was at hand for the restoration of Monte Cassino. A few stray brethren (our author conjectures) had, during that long desolation, tarried on the spot hallowed by the remains of Benedict and his sister, who rested side by side under the marble-floor of what had once been the abbey-church. Pope Gregory II. packed off the Lateran monks to the original seat of their Order. On those sacred relics the shrine was once more reared up. Around their native fold, in 718, the Abbot Petronace gathered the scattered flock. He carried with him the Book of the Rule, Benedict's own autograph, and the weight of bread and the wine mug appointed by the Saint as the daily allowance of the Cenobites. That mug and that weight have ever since been the safeguard, the most valued heir-loom, of the Order.

And now, the favours of Heaven and Earth were showered upon the blessed hill of Cassino. Gisulph, Duke of Beneventum, most amply atoned for the sacrilegious spoiliations of his predecessor Zotto. An estate nearly equal to one-half of his principality was made over to the abbey; and this handsome donation received the sanction of Pope Zachary, who visited Cassino in 748, and conferred the most extravagant privileges upon it, declaring it independent of all episcopal jurisdiction, and giving it a most unlimited precedence over all monastic institutions in existence.

As if with a view to test the faith of the pious, neither the deed of Gisulph's donation, nor the bull of Pope Zachary are now to be found in the archives of the abbey. The leaden seal of the latter document is, however, there still, to silence all scepticism; and what important matters may have been comprehended under that pontifical seal, who, at this day, shall be daring enough to determine? That enormous wealth and sovereign power, *per fas aut nefas*, fell to the share of the abbey, is matter of incontrovertible fact; and, that being the case, why should St. Benedict be expected to produce his titles to his rich dowry, any more than his apostolical brother St. Peter?

The remainder of the eighth, and nearly the whole of the following, century, may be looked upon as the palmy days of Cassino. Benedictine missionaries spread the Order over all Christian Europe. The famous abbeys of La Cava and Farfa in Italy, of Fulda in Bavaria, and Iona in the Hebrides, were either founded or modified in imitation of the Cassinese prototype. It was the age when the cowl superseded the helmet and cassock throughout Christendom. Carloman, brother of Pepin of France, Rachis, King of the Lombards, Adelard, a Prince of the House of Charlemagne, and other rulers of nations, laid down their treasures, together with their sins, at the gates of Cassino, where, to test their humility, they were appointed rulers over the herds and flocks of the monastery. The mightiest monarchs, Desiderius of Lombardy, Charlemagne, sued for the abbot's blessing. The French Emperor himself was the more liberal in his largesses to St. Benedict, as he gave what never belonged to him. Monte Cassino frequently interposed as a peace-maker and arbitrator, in the destinies of nations, and the quarrels of rival potentates.

Too soon, however, it became, in its turn, a potentate. Moral ascendancy was thrown aside in a vain strife for political supremacy. The Abbot Bestario, a Frenchman, a quarrelsome busybody, took too active a part in the contest that raged around him between the rival Princes of the house of the Benevento, and found himself thus in collision with the Saracens of Sicily, who were then spreading their ravages on the adjacent main-land.

Storms, inundations, imperial armies, Papal benedictions,



processions and briberies, for a long time warded off the formidable enemy from the sacred precincts of the abbey. But as the warlike abbot was rash enough to engage single-handed with them, the incensed Moslems turned against him in good earnest, and the Abbey on the Hill, together with its dependencies, the princely palace of St. Germano, and the rich structure of San Salvatore, were laid in the dust; Bestario and the bravest of his monks intrepidly meeting their doom on the threshold of the violated sanctuary, A.D. 884.

From the epoch of that bloody catastrophe to the year 949, the abbey was left to moulder on its ruins, silent and desolate. The surviving fraternity repaired first to one of their minor monasteries at Teano, and thence to Capua, where they built their splendid Abbey of St. Benedict.

But the enervating climate of that Campanian Babylon, proved no less fatal to the saintly fortitude of these Monastic champions, than it had proved to the thews and sinews of the warriors of Hannibal. The Abbot Aligerno, yielding to the urgent solicitations of the much-sandalized Agapetus II., removed the flock from further infection, and restored them to the bracing air and frugal life of their native home on the hill.

Henceforth the Benedictines built more castles than churches; their abbots were warriors and princes; the whole Order was a well-organized militia. Their wealth and sovereignty were in the ascendant. Ponte Corvo, Terracina, Aquino, and other thriving towns, were brought under allegiance either by spontaneous surrender, or by bequest, by purchase, by conquest. A line of frowning citadels towered on the heights all along the line of the abbatial domains. The abbot said mass in his coat of mail. He kept his court, his body-guard, Italian and foreign, and his stud of war-horses.

Such a height of prosperity was, of course, attended with frequent and serious difficulties. The Saracens had now been happily removed; but the Lombard barons, the Greek Catapans, and more lately the Norman adventurers, proved no less troublesome neighbours, though Christians. The latter, a cunning no less than a brave race, were for some time in the pay of the Monastery; but no sooner had they obtained a firm footing in the country, than they

evinced the greatest affection for the fat lands, fatter cattle, and rich treasury of the monastery. Domestication had engendered familiarity, and this again contempt, for their weak and vicious spiritual lords. There arose a long series of hostilities, in which craft was more often resorted to than strength.

The vassals of the abbey, demoralized and ill-fed boors, unfit for the battle-field, were often employed in ambushes and cold-blooded massacres, somewhat after the manner of the Sicilian vespers. It was by such an exploit of monkish strategy, that a troop of stalwart Norman soldiery were disposed of in 1038. Long in the pay of the Abbot Richerio, a Bavarian, they had first become rebellious, then hostile. They were invited to a reconciliation in the Church of St. Germano, and there slaughtered to a man, by the monks and the lawless rabble encouraged by their example.

The abbot, even if he was not the author of this deed of blood, did not fail to reap signal advantages from it. He led the murderers, backed by his German Guard, to the extermination of the remaining mutineers, and stormed the castles where they had entrenched themselves, one by one—St. Benedict himself with a heavenly host of his disciples hovering on the clouds, in support of his faithful flock.

But these external hostilities, incessant as they were, were less fatal to the morals of the monks, than their excesses in days of prosperity. The intrigues and treacheries, the riots and squabbles, inseparable from their abbatial elections, the stabbing and poisoning, the abductions and other secret crimes, were indeed evils characteristic of the age, and equally stained the annals of every court and family, of every community.

Still there is something so base, so perverse in the atrocities of these cowed murderers, their crimes are so much less than manly, so exquisite and elaborate in their premeditation, as to justify the saying that a priest is a something between man and woman, uniting all the violence and evil passions of the one sex, with the subtlety and pusillanimity of the other.

"The Bishop of the Marsians," to quote only one out of many instances of monkish villany, and to relate it in the quaint language of our chronicler himself, "was, at the

time, one Alberico, who, even in those days of general dissoluteness of the clergy, was looked upon as by no means the cleanest of bishops. This man had, through an evil connection, become father of a son for whom he was anxious to build a splendid fortune. He resolved to place him on his own See, and, *unsaddling* Mansone, the incumbent abbot, to secure for himself the Mitre of Monte Cassino. See, what a mad idea! He plotted with the Capuans, perhaps with Pandolfo himself (*the Prince of Capua, a patron of the abbey, but who had reason to fear Mansone's ambition*); he plotted with the monks, and he found them all rotten to the very bone, and open to bribery and corruption. Bishop and monks soon came to a good understanding. The latter were to contrive to get the abbot out of the monastery, take him to Capua, blind him, and accept a hundred pounds, Pavia currency, as a reward for their services. The brutish monks did all that. By dint of perjuries they induced the poor abbot to follow them to Capua; nor was this an easy task, for he had somewhat smelt a rat: but 'quem perdere vult Deus, prius dementat.' Mansone suffered himself to be taken to town, where he no sooner arrived, than those felons of monks took him to the Monastery of St. Benedict; and there, dreadful to relate! they tore his eyes out, and having carefully pickled and wrapped them up in a handkerchief, they went to present them to the bishop, claiming their own reward. The abbot died of grief; but Alberico had no leisure to enjoy the fruit of his enormous wickedness, as he fell dead the very hour in which Mansone was bereft of eye-sight: so neither did he get the abbey, nor the monks the wages of their crime." (A. D. 996.)

The tone of this narrative would induce us to class it among the fabulous legends, in which the annals of all monasteries are sufficiently rich. There is, however, no lack of other atrocities in the same style, which we might look upon as the contrivance of the enemies of monachism, were they not faithfully and minutely registered in the three volumes which have been compiled for the glorification of the Order.

The half-pompous, half-droll and vulgar, style of our monk, who professes to belong to the school of Botta, gives

these tales of blood a rich tone of humour, which might lead us to doubt the earnestness of his convictions. His authorities are, however, always diligently quoted, and his zeal for the sanctity of the Order cannot be questioned.

Meanwhile a momentous revolution had been operated at the head quarters of Catholicism. The Vatican councils had begun to feel the electrifying influence of the daring spirit of Hildebrand. The great contest between the Altar and the Throne, between the Empire and the Papacy, between Guelphism and Ghibelinism, was raging in northern Italy. Monte Cassino was now compelled to act on a wider field. She was henceforth the handmaiden of Rome. St. Benedict became St. Peter's shield-bearer. The Abbot Desiderio, aided by his former enemy, the Norman, proved the right arm of a militant body, of which Gregory VII. was the head. More than once, in 1077 and 1085, the haughty Pope would have succumbed, without the timely aid of his unshrinking, uncompromising ally. Monte Cassino became even a refuge for Gregory, when the whole world was leagued against him. After the death of that pontiff, the Abbot Desiderio was unanimously raised to the Papal chair.

All these events are matters of European history. But the league between Rome and Monte Cassino was fraught with mortal perils for the weaker party. The friendship of the Normans was of greater moment to the abbot, who found himself at their mercy, than the precarious support of the Popes. Involved in the lamentable vicissitudes of the kingdom of Naples, the monks of Monte Cassino were unable to pursue a straight and consistent course. They shifted their policy as if with a determination to survive the fate of all around them. They hastened the downfall of the Normans in 1194, when they perceived that fortune declared in favour of the Suabians. They deserted the cause of the latter family in 1260, when they saw the star of Charles of Anjou in the ascendant. They conspired against the Angevins in 1384, when the Arragonese dynasty hurled its rivals from the throne.

Meanwhile every change brought with it the decline of the power of the Monastery and the waning of its splendour. Charles of Anjou dealt the first blow against its

temporal power by depriving the abbot of the *Jus Sanguinis* in matters of criminal jurisdiction.\* His successors allowed them no rest, till they had stripped them of all their rights and immunities.

The Cassinese had also long since fallen from that popularity for which they were indebted to the sanctity of their institutions. Numberless rival fraternities, the ranting Carthusians, the sanguinary Dominicans, the squalid Franciscans, were more to the taste of the grovelling multitude, than the accomplished and aristocratic, spruce and tidy, Benedictines.

The vassals of the Monastery had lost all reverence for these spiritual masters. The revolts of the people gave the monks more uneasiness than the wrath of their powerful, royal antagonists. More than once the lazy rabble, whom they had trained to riot and bloodshed, broke in upon their councils, and carried an election by knives and cudgels. More than once a baronial marauder, after the fashion of Julian Avenel, like Jacopo da Pignatero or Loffredo, or a popular demagogue, like Francesco Blanco and other Cassinese Jack Cades, led the incensed peasantry of St. Germano against the sacred walls, plundered, burnt and demolished, and for months and years usurped the titles of Prince-Abbot and Bishop. More than once the whole fraternity was led into captivity by those lawless rioters. As feudal lords, they had their share in the hatred so early developed in Italy against feudalism; and, owing to their weakness and division, they even made a more ineffectual stand against popular movement, than the lay barons around them.

The last attempt to popularize the Cassinese was made not long after the invasion of Charles of Anjou, and at the epoch of the revived fervour for monachism, in the thirteenth century. The monks had almost been induced to change their habits, and it was hoped such an alteration might be attended with a salutary modification of discipline.

There lived then in a hermitage on Mount Majella, a meek and holy monk, in his seventy-second year, yclept Pietro Morone, afterwards a Pope and a Saint, under the

\* The privilege of the gibbet, of which these pious monks (our author informs us) "were extremely fond," *erano tenerissimi*.

name of Celestine. This man had taken holy orders in a Benedictine monastery, and even dwelt in a cell of Monte Cassino. Later in life, however—what saint ever was free from ambition?—he aspired to found an Order of his own, to which posterity gave the name of the Celestines.

The Cardinals in Conclave assembled, seized with a rare fit of piety, were on the look-out for a saint to be placed on the Chair of St. Peter: their choice fell on St. Celestine. They forced him from his gloomy solitude; they flung a scarlet mantle over his bristling sackcloth; they mounted him on an ass—for even the milk-white ambling *chinea*, or state palfrey of the Popes, was too dangerous a charger for the lowly friar—and, dwarfish, mean-looking, and squalid, they paraded him through the country, amidst the shouts of the delighted populace (1294).

The new Pope had but one idea in his head: how he could *Celestinize* the world. On his journey from Naples, he came to a halt at Monte Cassino. He summoned the monks around him, read them a long homily, and, much we should fancy in the style of the tailless fox, inculcated upon them the necessity of changing their black, for his grey, robes. The monks demurred; but the Pope was inexorable. Tailors were summoned; and a long order for grey cowls and tunics peremptorily issued.

The rest of the pontificate of poor Celestine is too well known. The weak-nerved saint felt giddy on the throne. The deadly tumults of the Roman barons frightened his soul out of his meagre frame. One morning early he ordered out his trusty donkey, resigned his crosier into the hands of his treacherous adviser and ruthless successor, Boniface VIII., and trotted back to his cell, where Boniface, desirous, no doubt, to help him in his work of mortification, threw him into a dungeon with Abbot Angelario, his Cassinese friend, where they both died a martyr's death of hardship and suffering, in 1296.

The monks at Cassino no sooner heard of the Pope's abdication and their abbot's misfortunes, than they tore their grey, unseemly frocks from their backs, and put on their soft, luxurious black gowns, resuming their sinful habits and worldly passions with them.

Not long after these events, the constitution of the Monastery suffered considerable modifications. Soon after



the death of Boniface, in 1304, the Church was led, as the priests term it, into captivity, in Avignon : and after a long exile, and still longer schism, it was restored to Rome, a mere spectre of its former greatness. The world had to witness something more base and wicked than the Popes of Rome ; and this was a series of French Popes. Monte Cassino, deprived of the support of Rome, hemmed in by the lands of the House of Anjou, had sunk into utter helplessness and insignificance. John XXII., himself a slave of Philip of France, sent a Bishop and a Frenchman to rule over the community of St. Benedict, which was thus reduced to a mere diocese and gallicized for more than half a century (1321—1373).

During this period the Abbey was a prey to all the horrors of incessant devastations both from foreign invaders and turbulent vassals. The treasury, the churches, the library, and, misery of miseries ! the very refectory, were visited by all the scourges of war, fire, storms and earthquakes.

The abbots were re-installed, and the Monastery re-organized under the auspices of Urban V. and Joan II. after 1370. Its independence was, however, at an end. The Vatican and the House of Anjou conspired for the spoliation of St. Benedict. Towns and territories were, one by one, seized upon by the two rival powers, and the abbots themselves managed to strip the Order of its most important possessions, by a clannish feeling, analogous to the *Nepotism* of Rome, enriching their families at the expense of the community.

The election of the abbot had long since become an unmeaning ceremony. The supreme ruler of Monte Cassino, under the name of *Abate Commendatore*, was either a Papal Legate or a Royal Viceroy : and the Monastery had thus become a mere dependency in the hands of the rival powers. In some instances the Pope himself (as Paul II. in 1465) declared himself the abbot ; in others, a Prince of the reigning house of Naples, as in the case of John of Arragon, a mere boy of 13, was invested with that nominal dignity.

The rise and fall of the dynasty of Arragon, the wars of Charles VIII., of Ferdinand and Charles V., inflicted still more dreadful disasters on the falling Abbey ; and

during its precarious existence for the three following centuries, it gave constant symptoms of gradual dissolution. By a compact of general confederacy, it was incorporated with and placed at the head of all the Benedictine fraternities in Europe: but even that meagre privilege was disputed by Cîteaux at the Council of Trent, when the abbot of Cassino magnanimously consented to waive his rights of precedence in favour of his arrogant Gallic rival.

The Abbey was already crumbling in consequence of its decrepitude, when there came the repeated strokes of the French Republic and Empire. Championnet, the Sans culotte, was hard upon the monks in 1798, and the Neapolitan Royalists were harder still, during their short restoration of 1799. Joseph Bonaparte at last suppressed it in 1805, appointing fifty of the brethren, uncowed, as keepers of the archives and library. In 1814, Pope Pius VII., himself a Cassinese, re-consecrated it. Ferdinand IV. re-endowed it. The abbey receives, now, a pension of 14,000 ducats (little more than £2,000). A score of Cenobites wander ghost-like about the silent cloisters. The college numbers from twelve to fifteen pupils: two thousand old women frequent the confessionals—*sic transit*, &c.

Don Luigi Tosti is welcome to pour out his jeremiads on the departed greatness of his renowned Monastery on the Hill. Such of our readers as feel disposed, may also tender him their sympathy and condolence. They may even go so far as to lament the downfall of similar institutions in this country, and regret the monkish broth, and other liberalities of the refectory, for which our imperfect poor-laws offer so inadequate a substitute. For our own part, we have heard, and the Monk has revealed, enough to satisfy us of the real merits of his fraternity. By the perpetuation of their vows, by their exclusion of all candidates of the middle and lower classes, by their wealth and luxury, the Monks of St. Benedict have most shamefully broken through the soundest rules dictated by their benevolent founder. They have proved themselves the most unbrotherly community, the weakest and most improvident masters, the most inhuman and unprincipled politicians. Like the Popes and all other ecclesiastical potentates, they hastened their fall, even whilst striving to avert it by the sacrifice of all about them. Never was power more un-

lawfully, more hypocritically, more unaccountably usurped ; never was it more flagrantly abused. For all this glaring evidence of misconduct on their part, the Benedictines, especially the Brethren of Monte Cassino, allege, by way of atonement, their signal services to the cause of science and literature.

We are not, indeed, prepared to admit, even were such services ten times as great as is generally pretended, that their misdeeds as monks could in any manner aid their work as treasurers of learning. Had their vows been more strictly adhered to, had they carefully abstained from political broils and turmoils, had they employed in libraries only one tenth of the wealth they lavished on the erection of fortresses, had they consecrated to writing one tenth of the time they wasted in their pitiful intrigues—their very poverty and humility would have secured the inviolability of their sacred retreat—books and parchments, had they been their only riches, would hardly have tempted the cupidity even of Hungarians and Saracens. Strange and melancholy to reflect upon ! Had the Benedictines been true to St. Benedict, we should hardly have any of our classical losses to lament !

Such as it was, however, Monte Cassino was long looked upon as the Ark of Literature during the ravaging flood of mediæval barbarism. The few illustrious men, whose names glimmer through the faint twilight of that gloomy period, from Boethius and Symmachus, visitors at the Abbey in the days of Benedict himself, to Thomas Aquinas, a pupil in the Convent-seminary in the early part of the reign of Frederic II., are, in some manner or other, connected with that old Monastery on the Hill. As every saint, every founder or reformer of monasteries, to begin by Mauro and Placido, the beloved disciples of Benedict, even to Ignatius Loyola, who prayed and fasted for fifty days in one of the adjacent chapels—was either a novice, a friar, or at least a worshipper at the Cassinese shrine—so every man of learning, from Paul Warnefridi, in the days of Charlemagne, to Boccaccio, in the middle of the thirteenth century—was either a reader or else a writer within the venerable halls of the Cassinese library.

Ere the latter of these scholars had, by his own experience, broken the spell of ignorance, Fame had magnified

the value and extent of the literary treasures resting on those time-honoured shelves, till they were thought to contain all the monuments of genius, all the *scibile* of the human race. The lamp of classical lore, it was fondly surmised, had been fed in silence and obscurity by those pious recluses:—to them all thanks and praise were due,—if it was now to blaze forth with renovated lustre, if the world was now to feel all its genial warmth, its redeeming influences. Boccaccio — we have said — partly dispelled the illusion. That second champion of Classicism, yielding in success only to his accomplished friend Petrarch, in zeal to no one—Boccaccio called on the monks, in the name of the re-awakened world, to claim the common treasure of which they were the reputed depositories.

“Being in Puglia,” it is related by Benvenuto da Imola, “that is in the Neapolitan kingdom, he repaired to the Cassinese Monastery, and, anxious to see the library, which, as he had heard, was a most noble collection, humbly asked of a monk to show the way and open the door for him. But the friar, with an evil grimace, rudely answered, ‘Walk up, it is open.’”

“Open enough, to be sure, it was; having neither door nor window-shutters: the dismantled casements were overgrown with rank weeds, whilst books, shelves and benches, were buried in a common litter under thick layers of dust. As the poet took up now one, now another volume, he found them all miserably torn, cut up, and destroyed in a hundred different guises, most of them without beginning or end.

“Hence taking his departure, sorely grieved at heart, he questioned a monk as to the reason of that ill-usage of the precious books. The friar made answer, that some of the brethren, wishing to turn a penny, had fallen into the habit of cutting off the margins of the larger works, of which they made little prayer and psalm-books, to be sold to the women and children of the neighbourhood.”

Against this charge of shameful neglect and wilful waste of their invaluable deposit, our Cassinese monk urges, that the lamentable state of the library at the time of Boccaccio’s visit, was owing to the ravages of the troops of Lewis of Hungary and the lawless partizans of Jacopo da Pignatero, whose incursions coincide with the epoch alluded

to (1348), when the monastery had besides severely suffered from plagues and earthquakes. The mutilation and destruction of classical works for the manufacture of penny breviaries, he rejects as a deliberate *falsehood*, attributing it to Boccaccio's notorious malevolence towards monks of all colour and habit, and refutes it by a most satisfactory statement of the flourishing condition of the library at the present time, the most ancient MSS. of which are still to be seen in the most wonderful state of preservation.

The world, however, has always lent a willing ear to Boccaccio's tale, and the idea that the Cassinese, not less than all other monks, either through ignorance or bigotry, suffered to perish or wilfully destroyed more of the profane classics than they actually preserved, is not to be counteracted by mere assertions.

The time of Boccaccio's visit is not satisfactorily stated by Benvenuto; and we should rather incline to name the year 1360, the epoch of his third visit to Naples, or even later, when Boccaccio was rather a scholar than a poet,—when he had long since been converted, and his ideas on monks and monasteries were so far altered, that he had long contemplated a retreat into a Carthusian convent, and wore the church dress to his dying day. It is also well to observe, that the honest novelist, even in his bitterest invectives against monkhood in his juvenile productions, never departed from that uprightness and truthfulness which were the most prominent features in his amiable character: nor can we suppose that he would have considered the charges of unfaithful or careless librarians as likely to weigh much against the reputation of the monks in an age in which books were mere *caviare* to the multitude. Surely the author of *Frate Cipolla* could invent something more to the purpose, if he wished to malign the monks, than the mere mutilation of books; a fable, which would hardly have made any sensation amongst a generation as yet so supine to the interests of literature.

The books which came into the hands of Boccaccio, defiled and dismembered beyond recognition, may have been removed by the repentant and shamed monks; and the manuscripts, quoted as patterns of Cassinese industry and diligence, may either have escaped the notice, or, from their sacred character, commanded the respect, even of

illiterate dealers in breviaries—or may have been added to the collection by subsequent acquisition.

For the rest, our Monk himself repeatedly assures us that the Cassinese, up to the sixteenth century, only busied themselves with theological literature; and the account he gives of the oldest works still extant in the library, afford no great idea of its importance to any but a divinity student. A few medical treatises, the works of Galen, and the Code of Justinian, are almost the only books mentioned, besides a host of Origenes, Ambroses and Augustines: 'the one half-pennyworth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack' in Falstaff's account.\*

\* For the benefit of the curious in bibliography, we submit the titles of the most valued MSS. in Monte Cassino, as given by our monk; he only notices those that are either wholly or partly inedited, or are remarkable for their beauty and rarity.

MSS. copied or collected by the orders of the Abbot Theobald towards 1022 :  
346. Origenes, in Epistolas Pauli : 451 leaves ; a part of it written in the VIth century.

4. Ambrosius, contra Arianos : 207 leaves ; VIIth century.

19. Augustinus, De Trinitate, lib. xv., and epistles.

302. Sozomenus et Theodoretus Hist. Tripart. The version by Cassiodorus : XIth century.

299. Ars Hilderici magistri, eruditissimi viri. Hilderic's grammar : IXth century.

79. Medical miscellany. Hippocrates, Galen, &c. : 275 leaves ; Xth century.

69. The works of Galen : 303 leaves ; IXth or Xth century.

49. The Code of Justinian ; Xth or XIth century.

57. Augustin's Commentary on the Psalms.

28. ——— De civitate Dei.

74. Gregorii Homiliæ, XL.

——— Moralia.

48. Claudius, in Epistolas Pauli.

97. Rabanus, De Origine Rerum.

98. Beda, Super Marcum.

461. Pontificale Romanum.

300. Historia Recuperationis Hierusalem et Antiochiæ, et alia ; XIIth century.

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Collected under the Abbot Desiderio in the XIth century.—A catalogue of the works, given at the time by Leo Hothensis, numbers, among others, some works of Cicero, Ovid, Terence, and Seneca, now no longer extant :

29. Auxilii Presbyteri Etymologicon Linguae Latinæ.

30. Aux. Presb. Questiones in Genesim, etc.

60. A commentary on Paul's epistles : anon.

69. Homilies of the holy fathers, Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose, Origen, Maximus, etc.

124. Jewish Antiquities by Josephus : a Latin version by Rufinus.

218. A Latin Lexicon : anon.

We have frequent allusions, but no distinct information, respecting the state of literature amongst the Cassinese community in the earliest ages. We are only vaguely told that Abbot Petronace, the restorer of the abbey in 718, Abbot Aligerno, its re-builder in 949, and others of the high-minded mitred prelates, were zealous promoters of all liberal studies. But the golden age of learning in the Monastery took place during the government of that same Desiderio (1058-1087) whom we have seen strenuously fighting the battles of the Church by the side of Gregory VII. This brave monk, by birth a Lombard, of the princely house of Benevento, restored all the edifices belonging to the Abbey, adding a library, and opening a school on the most liberal university plan, for scientific no less than ecclesiastical purposes. The most distinguished names in the Cassinese annals are those of his contemporaries. Constantine Africanus, the physician and astronomer, hunted from land to land as a heretic and a sorcerer, driven by envy and ignorance even from the famous school of Salerno, to whose lustre he had so powerfully contributed, found his last shelter under the patronage of the liberal-minded abbot. Leo Marsicanus and Amatus wrote their historical works at this period, and the annals compiled by their predecessors, by several learned abbots and other monastic chroniclers, were now carefully collected and

225. Medical Miscellany.

321. The book of Job; with a commentary by the monk Philip, a disciple of St. Jerome.

318. *Johannis Presbyteri, De Musicâ antiquâ.*

387. *Sermones et Colloquia inter Virtutes et Vitia: anon.*

359. *Concilii Ephesini Translatio, etc.*

351. *De curatione partium totius corporis.*

467. *Psalterium scriptum quinque modis.*

Etc. etc. etc.

As a specimen of monkish scholarship, as well as of their charity and forgiveness, we transcribe a note prefixed to some of their books by way of warning to literary thieves:—"Si quis vel unum de os libros, qui superius scripti sunt de predicta Ecclesia S. Benedicti, quolibet modo auferre molierit, vel temptaverit, non habeat pars neque sors in resurrectione Justorum. Sed sit pars ejus cum his qui ad sinistram positus in æterno igne damnandi erunt, et hic cum advixerint anathematis vinculo sint innodati. Dicite omnes, quæso: Fiat, Fiat. Et similiter patiaturs qui hanc anathemam de hunc librum avolare studirit."

In plain English: "If any man takes a fancy to any of these books, and dares to steal, or even thinks of stealing it, let him do so and be d—d. Amen." Such Latin and such feelings flourished at Monte Cassino in 1023.



neatly transcribed. "We must not," observes the historian Giannone, a man never accused of extreme partiality towards monks in general, "defraud the Cassinese monks of the well-deserved praise of having, in the midst of so much darkness, made the first efforts towards the cultivation of all the learned professions in these provinces. The diligence of the famous abbot, Desiderio, afterwards Pope Victor III., enabled us to obtain some knowledge of the works of Justinian, &c."

The famous Pietro Diacono, and that monk, Alberico, whose vision was supposed to have inspired Dante with the first thought of his mysterious journey, flourished about thirty years after the above period: and their names are almost the last occurring in our author's enumeration for a long lapse of years, corresponding to the disastrous times of the dominion of the houses of Suabia and Anjou, rife with the most dire calamities to the Abbey as well as to the progress of learning.

It was only in the sixteenth century, when classical literature had reached its zenith all over Italy, that a few of the Cassinese monks attained some degree of notoriety as Greek or Latin scholars, and Italian writers. But such names as Benedetto Dell' uva, Onorato Fascitelli, Angelo de Faggis, and Leonardo degli Oddi, are lost in the blaze of light emitted by the great luminaries of that ever-memorable era. In the same manner the historians Erasmo Gattala, Placido and Giovanni Federici, the Cassinese contributors to the colossal works of Muratori, in the earlier part of the eighteenth century—and the Irish antiquarian, Joseph McCarthy, and the philologist, Casimiro Correale, towards its close—are not calculated to give a very exalted opinion of the splendour of Cassinese literature towards its setting.

The arts, likewise, seem to have derived more substantial advantages from the munificence of the wealthy Monastery in olden than in recent times. The abbey church, its extensive cloisters, the abbatial palace at St. Germano, the castles, chapels, churches and hospitals, which cover the grounds for miles and miles around the base of the consecrated hill, were reared again and again, and always with the grandeur that signalizes all the edifices of the Roman Catholic Church. The treacherous ground on

which they rose, no less than the rage of ruthless invaders, frequently contributed to raze those several buildings to the ground; so that they received at different periods such additions and improvements as might well recommend them to the admiration of the world.

The fabrics of the abbey appeared at last to have reached the highest degree of perfection under the cares of the abbots, Ignazio Squarcialupi, and Angelo de Faggis, in the sixteenth century. Unfortunately, towards the year 1640, and down to the middle of the following century—a Spanish abbot, Quesada, leading the way—the monks, as if resolved not to leave well alone, undertook a complete reconstruction of their splendid Basilica. Italy was then at the lowest degree of corruption of all the arts, and we can readily believe our historian, when he assures us, that every stone within the territory of St. Benedict was irreparably disfigured by gaudy ornaments, tinsel and trumpery, in accordance with the false and *baroque* taste of the times.

Monte Cassino has thus, at the present time, little worthy of our attention in an architectural point of view. The master-pieces of Bassano, Luca Giordano, and others, are, however, still hanging on the altars of the abbey church.

Thus the literary influence, no less than the political importance, of Monte Cassino, even magnified to the utmost power of its panegyrists, belongs altogether to the gloomiest period of the ages of darkness. An edifice of barbarism, its mission was fulfilled, and its usefulness became more than questionable at the first dawn of modern civilization. All the following centuries of its lingering decay only tended to exhibit the vices of the system on which it was based. Monachism, at the best, could perhaps, in its own times, be looked upon as the least of evils; but it became the worst, when it outlived the general demolition of all others. The existence of monastic asylums may have been expedient, may have been providential, amidst prevailing anarchy and violence. Nay more, St. Bernard's Hospice on the Alps, and the Beguines of Belgium, have been spared by the boldest innovators. Temporary houses of refuge, so long as they are based on poverty, meekness and charity, such as Benedict's brotherhood in the first generation, might be viewed without suspicion even in more enlightened days:—but if men, in

the nineteenth century, will submit to be rough-ridden by arrogant despots like the Benedictines, or roasted alive by cowed fiends like the Dominicans, or eaten out of house and home by such begging locusts as the Franciscans—or, finally, led by the nose by such shallow hypocrites as the Jesuits—then, may Heaven have mercy on human blindness and perverseness!

But whatever may be the fate of monachism in its various shapes, it seems sufficiently demonstrated, that the Order of Benedict has lost the sympathies even of the Catholic world; for even in the so-called revival of piety throughout France, Italy and Germany, establishments like Monte Cassino are suffered to lie in comparative inactivity and insignificance, the more strenuous militia of Loyola engrossing all the maternal tenderness of Rome.

Meanwhile it may not be amiss to recollect, that the relics of monkish saints, their miraculous images, their endless legends and traditions, have done more towards deepening the chaotic night of the middle ages, than all their manuscripts, their chronicles and homilies could ever achieve towards its ultimate dissipation. The almost daily visits of pontiffs and monarchs, the arrival of some stray saint from far-off countries, the consecration of a new chapel or church-yard, the installation of a new abbot, or the burial of an old one, besides the annual solemnization of the festivals of a host of patron saints and benefactors, had ended by hallowing almost every day in the Calendar. Life at the abbey had the air of a perpetual holiday, and the seasonable performance of a miracle, the exhibition of a bone or a lock of hair, the gift of some allied fraternity, and the crowding of a host of pilgrims,—never failed to give a new zest to the usual church mummeries, whenever their sameness appeared to pall on the senses of the weary multitude.

The vassals at Cassino, no less than the populace at Rome, no less than the beggarly mob at Malta, or wherever priestly rule prevailed, were invariably ingrafted with an inveterate sluggishness, that ages of a better government will not be able to cure.

We shall abstain from quoting any of these ordinary and extraordinary ceremonies, which however, described as they are by the reverend Father Tosti with such grave

sanctimoniousness and would-be heroic magniloquence,—enlivened by the excellent illustrations with which his three handsome volumes abound,—might prove sufficiently edifying and amusing.

The vicissitudes of the bodies of Benedict and Scholastica alone, might furnish the subject of an epopée. The founder of Monte Cassino and his sister were, it is well-known, buried under the pavement of the humble chapel, which the former erected on the hill to the Divinity. On the first demolition of the Sanctuary by the Lombards, in 589, the terrified monks left those precious remains in the hands of the Pagans. Some of the fugitives, however, returned soon after that sudden dispersion, and stationed themselves as keepers of those unviolated sepulchres, during the whole exile of the fraternity at the Lateran.

The French Benedictines, however, who, since the first mission of St. Maur, had raised several flourishing establishments throughout their country, were as anxious for the possession of those illustrious carcases, as their Italian brethren could be ; and knowing very well that such treasures were not to be had for mere asking, they resorted to the obvious expedient of stealing them.

A monk, by name Aigulph, instructed by Momulus, Abbot of Fleury, was seen prowling, like a hungry wolf, about the ruins. The watchfulness of the guardians was lulled asleep by his show of fervent devotion—an opportunity was offered—and the pious theft was accomplished.

As the cunning Frenchman was smuggling his prey along the Appenines, and across the Alpine defiles, the Pope, Sergius, who had received a miraculous warning of the treasonable scheme, raised the hue and cry after the thief, and hurried, but too late, on his track ; the whole Italian priesthood in vain joining in the pursuit (A. D. 690).

It was, however, all labour lost for the French. Behold, at the restoration of the abbey in 718, the consecrated bodies were found snug, safe and sound at their place, in a state of perfect preservation, and breathing the never-failing odour of sanctity.

At the consecration of the Church by Pope Zachary, in 748, that good Pope saw them with his own eyes,

though he knew better than touch them with his own hands; nor did he fail to leave a precise and circumstantial account of the whole transaction in that famous bull, the leaden seal of which is still there to convince the most incredulous. Pope Alexander II. also saw those bodies, and fresher than ever, in 1071,—an incontrovertible proof that they had equally escaped the ravages of the Saracens in 884.

Yet, who would believe it? the French never ceased all the time to crow and to bray over the success of their thievish trick. They contended the corpses of the saints had actually reached Fleury in perfect safety, and had been lodged in the abbey-vault of that renowned sanctuary, where they gave, by frequent miracles, the most irrefragable proof of their presence.

Those venerable bones thus became a very bone of contention for the monasteries of both nations. Discussions, exhortations, tracts, anathemas, and finally squibs, pasquinades, and all sorts of ribaldries, were launched at each other's heads, by those fiery belligerents.

The faithful were mystified and bewildered. The bodies might be here, might be there—might possibly be everywhere.

At length, in 1478, the young Prince, John of Arragon, being raised to the supreme dignity in Monte Cassino, would have the matter settled by ocular demonstration.

Earthquakes, whirlwinds, and Egyptian darkness, were resorted to by the outraged saints to protect their holy relics from profane molestation. But the young abbot was not to be daunted. His masons dug deeper and deeper, till lo! under the main altar, under a slab of black marble, in a coffin of fragrant cedar—with their head to the choir, and the feet towards the shrine of St. John the Baptist—side by side, with their hands crossed on their breast, the brother and sister were reposing. "From their still living flesh," continues our authority, "a kind of *manna*\* was seen continually dripping, and depositing itself on a table of porphyry, where it immediately clotted and hardened."

The rash abbot and his abettors and accomplices, the

\* "Ἰχὺρ, ὥσπερ τε ρέει ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσιν."

Arragonese viceroy who had countenanced the sacrilege, and the Pope who permitted it, dearly paid for the gratification of their wanton curiosity. Sudden death, plagues, and civil wars, visited the guilty generation.

So that, when, at the last repairs, in 1637, the double coffin was again unwarily exposed to view, the Abbot Caffarelli and his monks, made wise by terrific experience, hastened to lay bricks and mortar upon it, fully satisfied that the evidence of our own eyes may not unfrequently mislead us —but faith, never !

## ART. III.—SACRED POETRY.

1. *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs.* By Isaac Watts, D.D. London, 1846.
2. *Anthologia Davidica; or a Metrical Translation of the whole Book of Psalms, selected from unpublished versions, with alterations, by Presbyter Cicestrensis.* London: F. & J. Rivington, 1846.

Of all the various expressions that Religion has won from man, none is so entirely religious as the Hymn; nor in the soul's manifold intercourse with God has she put forth any utterance so exclusively His as the Song of Praise. In prayer our business is with God, but in our own behalf: for ourselves we strive; the strictest self-regard is no impertinence here. But with the Hymn it is not so; that belongs to God, both as its subject and object: there we ascend to Him, we aspire for Him. Self-forgetfulness is our fitting posture nowhere more than here; our concern is not merely *with* Him but *for* Him.

In prayer our concern is too pressing, too immediate, for our utterance not to be of the simplest sort; we are no weighers of words, we make no long demand upon the fancy, stay for no glowing images, wait for no happy expressions. We speak as we feel, earnestly, warmly, vividly: but care not to take pains with our speech. But the Song of Praise demands that diligence; the Almighty is to be magnified; we stretch our faculties to the uttermost; we give God all we have, exalt Him with all the strength of our intellect, adorn Him with all the wealth of our imagination; refuse all forms of expression that seem unworthy of the theme, linger over the homage till we are better pleased with it; work upon it with ardour; perfect it with care; and then feel our greatest carefulness insufficient, and our best diligence idleness.

Not but that whole classes of Hymns express the very spirit of prayer, are as suppliant, as direct, as personal: not but that many lofty Songs of Praise have sprung at once into being, immediate creatures of the affections, without carefulness or painstaking. But this, the *essence*



of the prayer, is only the *accident* of the Hymn. For, undoubtedly, Sacred Poetry has been most glorious, when it has most closely adhered to its characteristic; when it has dwelt upon divine perfection rather than upon mortal want. Most nobly have those Sacred Singers done, who have looked most to God and least to themselves; who have filled themselves to greatest fulness with the light of Heaven, and cast no utilitarian eye upon things divine; who gather their faculties most closely around the divine attributes, linger most fondly about the divine glories, and give themselves most unreservedly to the celebration of the Saviour.

Full vindication for these remarks is furnished by the highest genius that ever took up the Sacred Lyre. As translator of the more prayerful Psalms, Milton often finds his match in Sternhold and Hopkins; while as the poet of Christmas Day, he has no peer among mortal bards. The Angels who informed the Shepherds could not but be out-sung by the sweet singer of the Nativity. An all-tasking, all-alluring occupation did his surpassing faculties regard it "to celebrate in glorious hymns the throne and equipage of God's Almightyness, and what he works, and what he suffers to be wrought with high providence in his Church." And yet against these high themes a wrongful charge has been brought—they have been calumniated as insufficient for lofty poetry, as unattractive of Genius. Dr. Johnson, who had the surprising folly to say of "Lycidas" that "the diction was harsh and the numbers unpleasing," presumed so say of Devotional Poetry, "the paucity of its topics enforces perpetual repetition, and the sanctity of the matter rejects the ornament of figurative diction." The barrenness of fancy which, in conjunction with political aversion, so strangely slandered that sweetest of sad elegies, could not help, in company with conventional piety, becoming the defamer of Sacred Song.

Is Religion incapable of moving a very high utterance because God "inhabits the praises of Eternity?" From the world's beginning there has been doting and self-immolation in the Mother, ardour and truth in the Lover, fondness and fidelity in the Spouse; yet, despite this sameness, the poet has been ever ready with his celebration. All human affection has remained in essence the

same, yet Genius has never murmured against it for scantiness of topic, but thanked it for most various and bountiful inspiration. Again; Man from his Creation-day has been strong and beautiful, has done great things, and yet that strength, and beauty, and greatness, though essentially the same, has never lacked any variety of commemoration. Is "The First Good, First Perfect, and First Fair," a feeble prompter, because with him Might, and Fairness, and Glory, are everlasting?

But it may be said that though human affections and endowments are the same in all ages at bottom, yet the difference that exists between man and man affects them differently. Each heart gives Love a different entertainment; Strength, Beauty and Goodness are holden under a variety of tenure. Here, it may be urged, Poetry possesses advantages which she does not find with Him, the absolutely, the entirely Unchanging One. To what thousand accidents is Human Love subject! how various its degrees! how delicate, how numberless, its shades! There is its doubt, its sadness, its subtle growth, its increasing fervour, its trembling joy, its passing rapture. There are rich materials for Poetry which she misses in the august stillness, the enduring evenness of Love Divine, watching us ever with serenest smile, holding us always in kindest embrace, ignorant of degree, sublime above circumstance.

All this may seem at first sight in the way of the heart's manifold utterance in Sacred Song: but against this uniformity of the Creator we must set the variety of the creature. For every filial spirit the Father has a manifestation of Himself separate and by no means similar. Love Divine meets with a somewhat different reception in every grateful heart; one cleaves to God in sadness, and gives Him a mournful constancy: another loves and trembles: another clings to Heaven softly, tenderly, humbly: the fidelity of another is fond and familiar: this man wears a calm and quiet piety; that is all energy, all aspiration, one perpetual rapture. Surely it is impossible for a mighty master of the human heart to find more various exercise of his power than in the analysing and giving forth of this manifold, mysterious, awful intercourse of the heart with Heaven, to murmur about "scantiness of topic."

And when has Genius such a call to be lavish of its strength and riches as when lending itself to the utterance of "the First Good, First Perfect, and First Fair,"—as in the endeavour to spring towards the Infinite, the Everlasting? According to the height of the flight should be the strength of the wing.

Religion can furnish Imagination with employment to perplex its manifold activity, to task its utmost strength. Shall Imagination unlock stores of undiscovered wealth, at every fresh demand the inferior affections make, and shall it plead poverty and emptiness to each summons of the loftier love? shall the ties of Earth be ever provoking Poesy to new and delicious utterance, and no reinforcement arrive to the hosts of sweet strains that muster round our bond with Heaven? Shall Man's petty greatness, Man's dusky splendour, always win noble celebration, and the Almighty, the all-glorious, prove less successful? Shall the halting progress of Mortality rejoice in the company of lofty songs of joy, and shall the stately march of the Eternal Providence be less augustly attended?

But no more of this superfluous questioning. Man has in every age, in every land, under every faith, bravely answered "No." Man's noblest and most precious affections have ever allured his loftiest genius, ever prompted it to sweetest and sublimest utterance. We must not judge of their power merely from the multitude of Hymns and Odes that they have inspired; we must not set down as their only servants, the Masters of the Sacred Lyre: *they* have not *alone* given their genius to God who have called their genius by His name. He and all that appertains to Him have not merely been exalted in songs expressly dedicated to Him and His: songs of wider range, of no exclusive inspiration, have contributed to His glory: Epic Poetry has lent itself to this service, has always leaned reverentially upon Religion, invoked her presence, introduced her themes, borrowed interest, animation and energy from her; received a subject at her hands; welcomed her as principal or auxiliar influence. The great, the universal characteristic of the Hero of Epic Song, is his religious aspect. He comes most prominently, most impressively, before us as the friend or foe of Heaven,—its chosen or its abhorred. What do we soonest find out of Achilles, Ulysses, Æneas,

Godfrey,—but that they are the favourites of the sky? In the Iliad, Odyssey, and Æneid, Religion is admitted as an auxiliary agency: the *glory* of the Gods is not the end of Homer and Virgil, but the honour of their Hero. Heaven is introduced as the Minister to his glory, as the labourer for his advancement. A Greek might call them Sacred Poems, though their sacredness is not their *chief* characteristic. But our peerless Epic is altogether a holy song: Milton would not make free with Heaven for the honour of his own creations, but created to glorify the Deity. There has been much dispute about the Hero of Paradise Lost. Some stout sticklers for Epic precision have been unable to discover any Hero at all: others have awarded that eminence to Satan. The true Hero is Divine Providence. For its honour does each character conspire, each incident combine. For this end strive ignorantly the opposing fiends, wittingly the helping angels. The horror of Hell, the charm of Paradise, but commend and glorify it. Exactly and augustly fulfilled was his early hope and prayer, “to take up a harp and sing thee an elaborate song to generations.” Obviously religious too is the Jerusalem Delivered; but its religiousness is not so peculiar as that of Paradise Lost. The Crusade, though undertaken in behalf of the Cross, overtowers it; the enterprise is greater, more prominent, than the inspiration! The characters are engaged in the service of Heaven; yet Heaven appears to minister, rather than be ministered to,—honours them, rather than is honoured of them.

Than the divine song of Dante, where can song more divine be found? If as Villemain would have it, it is Epic (inasmuch as an Epic according to him is the exactest expression of the age, the Cyclopædia of all its knowledge, the receptacle of all its ideas, the shrine of all its feelings), never except in Paradise Lost has Epic Poetry been more of a sacred song than in the Divina Comedia. Dante, though never standing as Milton often does,

“Within the visible diurnal sphere,”

has much more to do with men, has a much greater variety of human interest, is not so directly, intentionally, religious, declares the peculiar sacredness of his song in no solemn dedication, nor selects no less august a patron

than the Holy Spirits. The Hero of the *Divina Comedia* is—not Divine Providence, but the personal religion of Dante ; and glory is gathered, not so much around God's attributes, as about his own spiritual affections ; and among these we may surely reckon his love of Beatrice, from which all mortal mixture has departed.

Thus we see that in all great upliftings of the Imagination, Religion has borne her part and received her recompense ; that Epic Poetry, so far as in it lies, has consented, has exulted to become a Sacred Song.

And the songs which Religion has especially, professedly inspired,—her train of swelling Odes, her retinue of duteous Hymns, to what songs do they yield ? In multitude the songs of Sion have probably as much to boast as war-songs or love-ditties. And in excellence how can amorous or warlike Poetry be compared with Religious ? Beside Milton's unapproachable "Hymn to the Morning of Christ's Nativity," and Crashaw's amazing "Hymn to the Name above every name, the Name of Jesus," Pindar is inglorious, Horace impotent, Dryden faint, Gray feeble. The pen of amourist, whether "vulgar" or refined, (to pass by "the trencher fury of rhyming parasite,") even "the invocation of Dame Memory, and her Syren Daughters," can produce but ignoble poetry in comparison to that obtained by "devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance, and sends his Seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases."

Sacred Poetry is a wide, vast realm, divided into many provinces, with room for every soil and every climate. The variety of our Faith, the dissimilarities of Christendom, have contributed to diversify, and enrich it ; each portion of the Universal Church has its own peculiar feelings and ideas to express, its own special events to commemorate. The Roman Church has done her duty amply here,—has furnished Christianity with much of its objective Poetry. She has appropriately expressed herself, seized upon the outward occurrences of her faith, woven her history into song, hymned her graceful and alluring Idolatry, poured out many a sweet strain for the Virgin, grown melodious over every saint, borrowed inspiration from every ordinance, and given a voice to her chief character-

istics, her unity, endurance and unchangingness. Poetry however has not been her favourite expression ; she has preferred the language of picture and statue ; their power over the senses, their allurements for the eye, are more after her heart than the feebler attractiveness of numbers.

The spirit of song has fallen fully on Protestantism : her peculiar soul has upsprung on thousands of noble songs. She has gone straight with her homage to God, has burst into singing over the glories of his nature, devised many a fair celebration of his general providence, hymned rapturously his special grace, broke forth into strains of passionate gratitude to the Saviour, exalted the high estate of each spirit chosen of God, and congratulated the individual soul on its personal acquaintance, and close, unfettered intimacy with the Lord.

Thus we possess an objective and subjective Sacred Poetry : Holy Song is divided between the great external peculiarities of Faith and its deep internal necessities ; between the striking events of its outward history, its worldly glory, its power over nations ; and the still more solemn incidents of its reign within the soul.

The essential necessities of Religion impress upon the Poesy that ministers to her, another division. The Soul loves to utter itself alone ; it also delights to mingle utterance with others. Poetry then has to provide for the solitary worshipper and for the multitude of worshippers. It has to suit itself to the necessities of one lonely looker upon God, telling the all-indulgent Listener his own tale, without reference to the story of any fellow-being, confessing sin, beseeching pardon, giving praise, returning thanks, expressing admiration, declaring love, with the fond, eager exactness of one whose time is his own, who has not to look to others. Song is required to minister to a multitude of men, to give utterance to the common desires of all without offending the peculiar disposition of each, to adequately express the universal aspiration, and not sink below private affection,—to take possession of the public heart, and not be excluded from the individual Soul.

Thus the services which Poetry renders to the public and private Sanctuary have many points of difference.

The hymn of the congregation, and the hymn of the solitary soul, demand variety of exertion on the part of Genius. The same genius that is competent to produce the one, may fail altogether in the other. Between these two sorts of hymns there does not exist merely a diversity of inward character, but also a difference of outward expression. With what we commonly call the Hymn, the lines are short and but slightly varied, the rhymes rapidly recur, the measure is uniform, the whole composition brief. The private Hymn or religious Ode would feel itself uneasy within such limits, abhors brevity and uniformity of line, likes not always the rhymes to be near neighbours, delights to pass from measure to measure, to spread and stretch itself out to any length it pleases. Its only limitation is the boundless affection that inspires it; its only law the taste that may accompany such affection. Its necessities are wholly of its own creation. The Mind may here pour forth all its wealth, nor be accused of bootless waste, of pernicious prodigality. Imagination may rush impetuously forth, and enjoy all fulness of glorious liberty.

Never has Imagination so grandly fulfilled this duty, made such magnificent, yet such befitting manifestation of itself, as in the Ode we have more than once mentioned,—Milton's Hymn to the Morning of Christ's Nativity. Hallam with seeming hesitation pronounces it the greatest Ode that England has to boast of. This is more than has been heretofore said of it; but this is not enough. Such praise is poor and inadequate. Why not go further? why shall not England challenge the World to produce the fellow of this Ode?

It is as it should be; the greatest event in history has called forth the utmost strength of Genius. The most glorious day of the Six Thousand Years has been sung by the Supreme of Human Souls. The four preluding stanzas—how fervid, how swelling, how humble, how tender, how intense the longing to honour the Saviour—to exalt the Morn! What earnestness, what importunity in the question

“Hast thou no verse, or hymn, no solemn strand  
To welcome him to this his new abode?”



what sweet, what affectionate eagerness in the fancy of getting before "the star-led wizards."

"O run! prevent them with thy humble Ode,  
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet;  
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,  
And join thy voice unto the angel-quire,  
From out his sacred altars touched with hallowed fire."

With what sweet simplicity does the Ode begin, what charming use is made of Winter and its circumstances! One would cling to December 25th, and thank Tradition for fixing thereon the Birth of Births for the Ode's sake alone, nor give heed to objectors who would defraud our lips of the words

"It was the winter\* wild  
While the Heaven-born Child  
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies."

How exquisite the fancy of bashful, awe-stricken Nature, ashamed of dalliance with the Sun, and beseeching the air

"To hide her guilty front with innocent snow,  
And on her naked shame,  
Pollute with sinful blame,  
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw:  
Confounded that her Maker's eyes  
Should look so near upon her foul deformities."

And what wonderful tenderness, what amazing beauty, in the removal of her fears, by sending down

"the meek-eyed Peace."

What has himself in Comus, or Shakspeare in any play, poem or sonnet, to surpass the fancy that accompanies the downward flight—

"With turtle-wing the amorous clouds dividing."

History too is sweetly harmonised with Nature; the peace of sky, and air, and ocean, is most charmingly made

to blend with the peace of kings and peoples. Can that line be over-praised

“ While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave”?

Stars and sun are put to most delightful service. How noble and poetic is the astonished lingering of the former, —their attraction to the manger,

“ Bending one way their precious influence,”

their heedlessness of the Morning Star's repeated summoning away,—followed, how harmoniously! by the tardy, timorous Day-Lord, ashamed to show his face before the Sun of Righteousness!

And the simple shepherds! every thing about them is in such graceful consistency. What happiness in the mention of “ the mighty Pan!” The singing of the angels is indeed *song*; the heavenly music is most musically set forth; the words seem a gush of sound. The melody of Milton's soul thus early showed itself. We need not to be *told* that our Milton was given to Music. These stanzas declare it unmistakeably. Right well is it proclaimed in that grand invocation,

“ Ring out, ye crystal spheres!  
And with your ninefold harmony  
Make up full concert to the angelic symphony!”

One would imagine the theme completely set forth, the bard utterly exhausted; every thing that could be said seems said. But Milton did not find it so. Nature, the season, the heavens, the angels, had been all called in, had rendered most excellent service. But there is something more to come. Heathendom does homage to the day;—there sighs panting Paganism. To what a wonderful intimacy with the heart and spirit of heathendom had the boy of twenty-one attained! He knew it all, felt it all, all its beauty, all its glory, and brought it all out before

“ The rays of Bethlehem.”

The oracles dumb, the mountain unpeopled, the fountain unhaunted, the dale disenchanted, the hearth abandoned, the shrine unsanctified,—all are here! Thus early too his

mighty lore revealed itself, and in such loyal subserviency to his genius, never confusing, never overloading it.

The grandeur, too, with which the Gods are dismissed! the glorious simile that exalts their dispersion! How sublimely is the figure brought in! Mark the softness and delicacy of its spreading out—

“As when the Sun in bed,  
Curtained with cloudy red,  
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave;  
The flocking shadows pale  
Troop to the infernal jail;  
Each fettered ghost slips to his several grave;  
And the yellow-skirted Fays  
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving the moon-loved maze.”

Could there be devised a statelier, a more exquisite, conclusion, than the shining watch of

“Heaven’s youngest-teemed star  
Over her sleeping Lord,”

the guard of

“Bright harnessed angels”  
“All about the courtly stable”?

For the sake of the surrounding beauty, we are ready to forgive the false humility of the line—

“Time is our tedious song should here have ending.”

We can only say of the hymn what itself says of the angels’ singing—

“For if such holy song  
Inwraught our fancy long,  
Time will run back and fetch the age of gold.”

And this peerless Ode has scarcely been acknowledged among us. It is not the least evil sign of the last century, that not merely this Hymn’s pre-eminence, but even its existence, was almost forgotten. Gray, in a note to the Progress of Poetry, says, “We have had in our language no other Odes of the sublime kind than that of Dryden on St. Cecilia’s day.” Those who call Alexander’s Feast

a drunken song, grossly revile it; but compared with "the Morning of the Nativity," it is vulgar enough.

Still more unfortunate has been another great Religious Lyric, Crashaw's "Hymn to the Name above every name, the Name of Jesus." The last century knew him not, or was wholly indifferent to him. And no wonder. Of all conceivable poets, Crashaw was the one least likely to find favour with that cool, quiet, undevout, unimpassioned time: such fervour of fancy! such daring of aspiration! so rapt a soarer! so absolutely ethereal! His delight is to express religious affection with all possible energy and richness. Perhaps no poet was ever so completely a religious enthusiast. His diction has singular sweetness, ease, and freedom; no archaisms impede it. For nothing do we more admire him than that his peculiar gorgeousness of fancy and intensity of feeling have almost always uttered themselves with such unconstrained strength, such transparent clearness. His "Hymn to the Name above every name, the Name of Jesus" (how exquisitely entitled!) is his greatest achievement. It is a gathering together of richest, sweetest, most fragrant fancies; a genuine endeavour of the affections. Herein we behold the sovereign triumph of Enthusiasm and Fancy. We do not meet here with that all-commanding, all-harmonizing union of Intellect and Imagination, characteristic of every work of the highest genius, and so grandly pervading the Miltonic Hymn; a nameless power, as it were, that bestows a lofty completeness on every production, and so powerfully yet imperceptibly helps our memory to retain the treasure. This highest gift was not Crashaw's—does not mark the Hymn. But, without this, it has enough to fill us with admiration and delight. The way wherein he celebrates "the Name above every name," should be pointed out. He does not concern himself with the history of Jesus, takes no particular incident of the divine story, has no direct thanks for the heroic life and the still more heroic death, glories neither in the spotless example nor in the reconciling blood. He thanks, without stating the matter of gratitude. His glowing, rapturous praise will not account for itself. He sings in all imaginable ways, "I love the Lord," without declaring why and wherefore. Christ was, with him, too wholly, too inwardly present to

be specifically thanked ; stood for all might, majesty, purity, glory, goodness ; for all and each of these, he felt "the Name above every name" a synonym. His gratitude will let *him utter only what we feel for Christ*. The first five lines alone contain just a hint (a very faint one) of what Christ has done for us :—

" I sing the Name that none can say,  
But touched with some interior ray—  
The Name of our new peace—our good—  
Our bliss—our supernatural blood—  
The name of all our lives and loves :  
Hearken and help, ye holy doves,  
The high-born brood of day, ye bright  
Candidates of blissful light—  
The heirs elect of love, whose names belong  
Unto the everlasting life of Song."

The instinct of praise urges him—he must be all praise : and there follows even a brave exhortation to his soul to sing, accompanied by what tender self-distrust !

" Awake, my glory ! soul (if such thou be,  
And that fair name at all refer to thee),  
Awake and sing,  
And be all wing !  
Bring hither thy whole self, and let me see  
What of thy parent Heaven yet speaks in thee !  
O ! thou art poor,  
Of noble powers, I see,  
And full of nothing else but empty me,  
Narrow and low, and infinitely less  
Than this great Morning's mighty business.  
One little world or two,  
Alas ! will never do—  
We must have store ;  
Go, Soul, out of thy cell, and seek for more !  
Go and request  
Great Nature for the key of her huge chest  
Of worlds (the self-involving set of spheres  
Which dull Mortality more feels than hears),  
Then rouse the nest  
Of nimble art, and traverse round  
The airy shop of soul-appeasing sound ;  
And beat a summons in the same  
All Sovereign name,

To warn each several kind  
 And shape of sweetness—be they such  
 As sigh with supple wind,  
 Or answer artful touch,  
 That they convene and come away,  
 To wait at the love-crownéd doors of that illustrious day !”

When was Music more grandly, more musically invoked ?  
 Crashaw’s soul, like Milton’s, was a right melodious one.  
 He is the very poet of the Organ, of the Cathedral. It has  
 been said, “Go deep enough, and there is Music every  
 where.” This most true and excellent saying is but a  
 feeblèr repetition of Crashaw’s assertion and invocation of  
 her omnipresence :—

“Wake in the Name  
 Of him who never sleeps, all things that *are*,  
 Or what’s the same,  
*Are musical.*  
 Answer my call,  
 And come along,  
 Help me to meditate mine immortal song.”

Watts has a noble hymn entitled “Asking leave to Sing :”  
 how sweetly does Crashaw rejoice in leave given ! When  
 has humble gladness, trembling rapture, met with a richer,  
 intenser, tenderer, **more glorious and flaming utterance** than  
 what follows ?—

“Cheer thee, my heart !  
 For thou, too, hast thy part  
 And place in the great throng  
 Of this unbounded, all-embracing, song.  
 Powers of my soul ! be proud,  
 And speak aloud  
 To all the dear-bought nations that Redeeming Name,  
 And in the wealth of one vast word proclaim  
 New smiles to Nature !  
 May it be no wrong,  
 Blest Heavens, to you and your superior song,  
 That we dark Sons of Dust and Sorrow  
 Awbile dare borrow  
 The name of your delights and our desires,  
 And fit it to so far inferior lyres.  
 Our murmurs have **their** music too,  
 Ye Mighty Orbs, as well as you ;  
 Nor yields the noblest nest  
 Of warbling Seraphim to the ears of Love

A choicer lesson than the joyful breast  
 Of a poor, panting turtle-dove.  
 And we, low worms, have leave to do  
 The same bright business, ye Third Heavens, with you !”

From a multitude of fond fancies, wherewith he welcomes the Saviour, none are more strange and striking, yet gracious and rich withal, than this :—

“ Fair, flowery name, in none but thee  
 And thy nectareal fragrancy,  
 Hourly there meets  
 An universal synod of all sweets ;  
 By whom it is defined thus—  
 That no perfume  
 For ever shall presume  
 To pass for odoriferous,  
 But such alone whose sacred pedigree  
 Can prove itself of kin, sweet name, to thee.”

Who can rebuke the tender extravagance that succeeds?

“ Sweet name ! in thy each syllable  
 A thousand blest Arabias dwell ;  
 A thousand hills of frankincense,  
 Mountains of myrrh and heaps of spices,  
 And ten thousand Paradises,  
 The soul that loves thee takes from thence !  
 How many unknown worlds there are  
 Of comforts which thou hast in keeping !  
 How many thousand mercies there  
 In Pity’s soft lap lie a-sleeping ! ”

Which is more to be admired—the exceeding beauty of the image here, or the profound truth uttered by the last four lines ? the new and unexpected stores that each soul is ever finding in Christ—the fresh life that each succeeding age draws from him ? What Christian soul does not take fire beneath the eager wish expressed below the great recollections so gloriously set forth ?

“ O, that it were as it was wont to be !  
 When thy old friends of fire, all full of thee,  
 Fought against frowns with smiles ; gave glorious chase  
 To Persecution ; against the face  
 Of death and fiercest dangers durst with brave  
 And sober pace march on to meet a grave.



On their bold breasts about the world they bore thee,  
And in the teeth of Hell stood up to teach thee!  
In centre of their inmost hearts they wore thee,  
Where racks and torments strived in vain to reach thee!"

What a wonderful antithesis that of "gave glorious chase to Persecution!" Of such a gracious, such a sublime sort is this slighted, this unknown Hymn. With thought and fancy to fit out twenty long Odes with riches that make the lyric effusions of Dryden, Pope, Gray and Mason appear poor, it has been disregarded by the critics. England has not recognised it as one of her chief lyric glories.

A devout Englishman may be justly proud that for sublimest Religious Odes he has to go to the literature of his country. Nor is it perhaps a piece of national arrogance to assert that in Hymns too, commonly so called, in short religious poems, our language is best off. With us, Poetry has taken best and kindest care of the solitary soul, has provided most fully and fittingly for the congregation. This simple, undeniable, and, as we think, unremarked fact, says much for the religious spirit of our England, proclaims us at bottom a thoroughly believing nation. The long and wide popularity of Hymns and short divine Songs can only be explained by the prevalence of deep devoutness of feeling among the people. The great favour enjoyed by Herbert and Quarles in the seventeenth, by Watts and the Wesleys in the following century, shows, that however irreligion and corruption may have befallen certain classes, the heart of England was earnestly religious. At no time has she refused a welcome to the Hymn.

It was remarked above, that the song sung in company, and the strain lifted up in solitude, require to be carefully distinguished. The hymn of the congregation, and the hymn of the solitary soul, demand variety of exertion on the part of Genius. The formal peculiarities of the hymn were pointed out—regular and rapid recurrence of rhyme, uniformity of measure, and shortness. Its inward characteristics must be drawn out at length. Ignorance and neglect of them has spoiled many well-meaning hymn-makers, has damped the devotion of many an assembly. No region of Poetry has been more mercilessly invaded by pretenders than has this noble one. Materials are so readily at hand; the brevity too demanded by the occasion

is so encouraging. The incapable aspirant has only to lay hold on the common-places of religious sentiment and expression, to couple (not "love" and "dove") but "love" and "above," link "give and live," associate "die and high," wed "given and Heaven," and the business is done. For this Ministry of Worship, this service of the Sanctuary, to be fitly performed, requires no little genius, no small command of such genius, right conceptions of Worship, a high and earnest spirituality, no slight acquaintance with the human heart. It must be felt that "Worship is an attitude which our nature assumes not for a purpose but from an emotion." Devotion must be recognized as unutilitarian, as the most unutilitarian of things, or its utterance in the hymn will be well nigh powerless. The hymn should contain no statement of doctrine, no enunciation of principles, no enforcement of precepts; from the expression of the affections it should never be withdrawn, nor a foreign service imposed upon it, for which it has no ability. Sacred Songs should be wings on which the affections soar aloft; not slow and deliberate vehicles, whereby instruction travels to us. The hymn, then, should be utterly undidactic; should not obviously seem to teach; conventionalism must be entirely put away. But Fancy must not therefore be too forward, must not presume too much on this exclusion of her adversaries, must show some reserve, remember that she is not engaged about the Ode, that she has not to adorn and beautify the devotion of a lonely, fond enthusiast, but to help many sinners to repentance, many mourners to comfort, many simple but grateful ones to praise. The business of Poetry and Music in the assembly is to bring our souls, formed so variously, disposed so differently, as near as possible to God; consequently no unimaginative hymn can be of much avail. But Imagination must take care against excessive indulgence, or the worshippers may be diverted, and dwell upon the manner of celebration rather than upon the Being celebrated. A Song of Sion cannot be too intense, glowing, vivid; *but* may be easily too figurative. Genius must here exercise thrift, but a thrift conscious of riches, careful only not to misbestow them. Imagination must put itself forth with power but with reserve. Its strokes must be strong, quick, sharp, decisive. There must be no linger-

ing over a metaphor, no dilation of a simile. When Nature is introduced, it must be briefly, swiftly. There must be no dallying with her, no prolonged mention of her, no shadow of *description*. There is danger that the worshippers will stay with these things, and be kept from the greatest thing; that the fancy will be entertained, and not the soul; that the critic will be charmed, and not the worshipper edified: that Genius will be exalted at the expense of its divine employer; that devotion's greatest help may become its greatest hinderance. *Directness* is the great virtue of a hymn. The soul should spring straight to God; she is wronged when allowed to halt upon the way, however fair it be.

Of all who have taken upon themselves this service, who have sung for the Sanctuary among us, the one who has endeavoured most successfully, our sweetest singer, is Dr. Watts. England has not produced a sacred poet, so various, so earnest, so powerful, so vital, so abiding. Criticism has not recognized him—has not recognized indeed Holy Song as a separate department of Poetry, as an individual glory of our Literature. Our great bards have not given the right hand of fellowship to this worthy compeer. This sovereign poet of the congregation has not been deemed worthy to wear a wreath among the laurelled brotherhood. Ignorant or undevout critics have presumed to despise him; reviewers have flung their sneers at him. Because he sang so sweetly to childhood, moved, and melted, and impressed, and won it, as no other has done, therefore he has no power to entertain men; therefore we are to pass by his strains in silent good-natured pity, as the impotent endeavours of prosy, well-meaning piety. So much for criticism. What have the people thought about him? how have they received his strains?

How mighty, how supreme, has he been here! what an eager, full, eternal welcome have the *people* given him! How closely, how intimately, how abidingly has he dwelt in their hearts! They have bought him, read him, learned him, sung him, as they have no other Englishman. Is it not a proud thing for a son of the Puritans to think on, that three Puritans, John Bunyan, Daniel Defoe, and Isaac Watts, have written the most widely-read books that our country has to show? Who can gainsay this of the

Pilgrim's Progress, of Robinson Crusoe, of the Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs? It may be, without exaggeration, said of Watts, that no man has been so often on the lips of private devotion, has glorified so many hours of religious solitude; that no poet, save only the sweet singer of Israel, has been so mighty in the Sanctuary, has furnished so many assemblies with melodious utterance of praise, thanksgiving, confession, humiliation, fear, hope, love and joy. No poet, too, has glorified so many death-beds—has made so many departing souls eloquent—has just anticipated for such multitudes the first welcome of the Angels! none of whom we can say, as we can of him,—

“And dying-bed confessed his precious power  
To graft delight upon the dreadful hour.”

The time and circumstances of Watts should have some mention here. His life extended over about a fourth of the seventeenth and nearly half of the eighteenth century (1674—1748)! His period of activity was that of Walpole's, of Bolingbroke's, of Pope's, of Voltaire's—lay in the world's most sceptical age. But even here Faith had her green spots. On the greenest and fairest of these was it the happiness of Watts to dwell and work; his glory lay in making it still greener, fairer and wider. He sung to the Puritans—no longer the mighty men of the last century, the sufferers under Charles and Laud, the choosers of the western waste with freedom of conscience rather than merry England with fettered faith, the heroes of 1642 and 1649, the great public doers, victors of Marston Moor and Naseby; slayers of kings, expellers of bishops, righters of conscience, establishers of commonwealths. The grandsons were not their grandsires in any but the greatest thing—in faith; in being the intense believers of England—the only class of Englishmen—almost of Europeans—who *lived by their faith*,—whose belief was verily lord of their life. Their religion was not peculiar to the Sanctuary; it ruled both home and shop. Amidst unbelief, half-belief, and pretended belief, they stood forth, earnest, thorough, believers. The intelligence, the philosophy of the time, were but slightly theirs. They led not their age, nor followed it. They were at once above and below their century. They had lost the outward

greatness of their fathers. They had no Cromwell, no Vane, no Milton : but they had a Watts. He gave melodious utterance to their great concern ; his hymns revealed their life : here breathe, and glow, and tremble, the fears, and hopes, and aspirations, of the most religious men then living : in him the Religion of the Time found a spokesman. This was his great service, and a right-glorious one too : not that this was all his work. He did many other things—all good—all of some note—of some avail ; but nothing like this. He knew much and wrote much. Metaphysics, Logic, Natural Science, Astronomy, General Literature, employed his pen. The world of letters has recognised him here : in his inferior offices has given him all the honour due. But herein he was an under-workman, guided by others, repeating others, diffusing others. In his peculiar work alone he has not been contemplated : his great business—that which no other man has done—has not been adequately set forth. The Lyric Poems, the Hymns and Spiritual Songs, the Imitation of the Psalms—these are his monument, his glory ! Thereby was he warmly welcomed, has been fondly and well remembered.

As a *sacred* poet alone is Watts great. The verses addressed to friends, though by no means *bad*, are not of much worth. He owns to be sure one very happy piece of mingled humour and seriousness—"Few Happy Matches." But still it may be said that he was a poet only in the presence of God, that over divine things only could he intensely glow. The Scriptures alone had power to inspire him ; away from Christ and his Cross, salvation and Heaven, he sadly shrank. In praising the Creator, no one ever soared more sublimely ; in extolling the creature, he too often crept. He had, indeed, to look Heavenward ere the spirit of song would come upon him ; and then he sung out to the joy of every soul that heard him.

We may call Watts the great Protestant Singer, the chief Poet of the Sanctuary, the most melodious revealer of the soul's intercourse with God. For this business he was in every way fitted. Whatever the Hymn-writer ought to possess, was possessed by him. A man more intensely religious, more in earnest with his task, more

in love with things divine, never prayed, never aspired, never toiled, preached, wrote or sung. How sweetly does the intenseness of his piety, the fulness of his religion, break out in the following soft and holy apprehension (Preface to Hymns): "I confess myself to have been too often tempted away from the more spiritual design I proposed, by some gay and flowery expression that gratified the fancy. The bright images too often prevailed above the fire of divine affection, and the light exceeded the heat. Yet I hope that in many of them the reader will find that devotion dictated the song; the hand and head were nothing but interpreters and secretaries to the heart." This complete avoidance of self-exaltation and entire devotion to his theme did not a little constitute his power and assist his success. In truth, this absorption in the matter makes him sometimes heedless of the expression. He now and then becomes careless, negligent; but his carelessness is that of strength; his negligence of the best sort—what we can readily forgive—that of a man unoccupied with himself.

One of his peculiarities, as a sacred poet, to which his hymns owe much of their power, and which lifts him above other masters of holy song, is his intimacy with the human heart. Our inmost nature was an open page to him. Pastoral experience to him was something. He did not merely know us as we mostly are—moderately joyful, properly sad, decently well-affected towards religion, respectably in earnest, conventionally assured of eternity, agreeably convinced of Heaven, prudently afraid of Hell. He knew the power of Religion far otherwise; had gone to the bottom of us, and found that in our hearts was the brightest adamant of faith and the blackest and most choking sand of doubt, the extremity of sadness and the excess of delight. He dived into the darkness of our despair, and climbed the topmost height of our rapture. Hence men who do not feel deeply or consider deeply, have assailed some of his hymns as inhumanly gloomy, and unnaturally exulting; as untrue to Man and touching no heart-string, and provoking no sympathy. Not a few mourning souls have claimed a property in the forlornness of the following lines, have felt the desolation

and clutched at the comfort ; looked the more longingly to Heaven from the harshness and repulsiveness of earth.

“ A thousand savage beasts of prey  
Around the forest roam ;  
But Judah's lion guards the way,  
And guides the strangers home.

Long nights and darkness dwell below,  
Without a twinkling ray ;  
But the bright world to which we go  
Is everlasting day.

By glimmering hopes and gloomy fears  
We trace the sacred road ;  
Through dismal, deep and dangerous snares  
We make our way to God.”

Are there not happy pilgrims too who own to the most joyous longings, the most humble rapture of this hymn?—

“ Father, I long, I faint to see  
The place of thine abode,  
To leave these earthly courts, and flee  
Up to thy seat, my God.

Here I behold thy distant face,  
And 'tis a pleasing sight ;  
But to abide in thine embrace  
Is infinite delight.

I'd part with all the joys of sense  
To gaze upon thy throne ;  
Pleasures spring fresh for ever thence,  
Unspeakable, unknown.

There all the Heavenly Hosts are seen ;  
In shining ranks they move ;  
And drink immortal vigour in  
With wonder and with love.

Lo ! at thy feet with awful fear  
The adoring armies fall :  
With joy they shrink to nothing here  
Before the Eternal All.



There would I vie with all the host,  
 In duty as in bliss,  
 While less than nothing I can boast,  
 And Vanity confess.

The more thy glories strike my eyes  
 The humbler I shall lie :  
 Thus while I sink, my joys shall rise  
 Immeasurably high."

But it was not only our deepest and highest secrets that Watts mastered ; he is not only the familiar of our awful sorrow, of our bursting joy ; he knew us altogether, in every conceivable variety of feeling ; for all our moods provided expression. The religious man can be in no condition wherein he may not cry out in the words of Watts. The varied events and revolutions of our spiritual state have found a voice. The soul that has striven with sore temptation, striven sternly and conquered bravely, that glows beneath the smile and reposes in the embrace of the divine forgiveness, will she not too thank Watts for sweetly telling her peace and joy ?

" Lord ! how secure and blest are they," &c.—B. II. Hymn 57.

To the soul who has known God, and delighted in His presence, but over whose joy has passed the thought that one day she may be separated from Him, that the happiness may close, the glory be darkened,—to such a soul, how naturally comes this fond beseeching, this tender importunity, of Watts ; too beautiful and too little known not to be given entire :—

" How sad and dreadful is the thought !  
 How it distracts and tears my heart,  
 If God at length, my sovereign Judge,  
 Should frown and bid my soul depart.  
 Lord ! when I quit this earthly stage,  
 Where shall I fly but to thy breast ?  
 For I have sought no other home,  
 For I have learned no other rest.  
 I cannot live contented here  
 Without some glimpses of thy face,  
 And Heaven without thy presence there  
 Will be a dark and tiresome place.

When earthly cares engross the day,  
And hold my thoughts aside from thee,  
The shining hours of cheerful light  
Are long and tedious years to me.  
And if no evening visit's paid  
Between my Saviour and my soul,  
How dull the night, how sad the shade!  
How mournfully the minutes roll.  
My God! and can an humble child  
That loves thee with a flame so high,  
Be ever from thy face exiled  
Without the pity of thine eye?  
Impossible!—for thy own hands  
Have tied my heart so fast to thee,  
And in thy book the promise stands  
That where Thou art thy friends must be."

The Christian, feeble, tender and sorrow-stricken, with Heaven ever provoking his desire, but sometimes half-hidden from his faith, what fitter utterance can he find than the well-known transcendent hymn beginning

"There is a land of pure delight," &c.—B. II. Hymn 66.

When have Love and Faith conspired to provide bereaved affection with sweeter consolation than in that most tender strain—

"Why do we mourn departing friends," &c.—B. II. Hymn 3.

Are we strongly beset by the world, yet would altogether cling to God? and does the Outer Life look seducingly fair, yet would we with all our might embrace the Inner? Here also Watts is singularly helpful. Witness the noble and familiar hymn, (Book II. Hymn 122,) "My God permit me not to be," &c. The following hymn, which is too magnificent and little known to be only alluded to, and must be given at length, is the mightiest expression we know of the Faithfulness of God, of the soul's secure resting in the Promise—that idea so beloved, so intensely holden by the Puritans, and which in some form or other must ever be the delight and stronghold of every devout spirit. A hymn more intense and passionate, bolder and humbler, tenderer and more sublime, more human, more divine, truer to the All Gracious, Unchanging God, to the

lowly, trustful, aspiring soul, we cannot conceive ! How sublime its opening !

“Begin, my tongue, some heavenly theme,  
And speak some boundless thing—  
The mighty works or mightier name  
Of our Eternal King.

Tell of His wondrous faithfulness  
And sound His power abroad ;  
Sing the sweet promise of His grace,  
And the performing God.

Proclaim salvation from the Lord  
For wretched dying men ;  
His hand has writ the sacred Word  
With an immortal pen.

Engraved as in eternal brass  
The mighty promise shines ;  
Nor can the powers of darkness raze  
Those everlasting lines.

His very word of grace is strong  
As that which built the skies ;  
The voice that rolls the stars along  
Speaks all the Promises.

He said, ‘Let the wide Heaven be spread,’  
And Heaven was stretched abroad !  
‘Abraham, I’ll be thy God,’ He said—  
And He was Abraham’s God.

O ! might I hear Thy heavenly tongue  
But whisper ‘Thou art mine ;’  
Those gentle words should raise my song  
To notes almost divine.

How would my leaping heart rejoice,  
And think my Heaven secure !  
I trust the all-creating Voice,  
And Faith desires no more.”

Of this mastery of man’s heart, this acquaintance with all its “subtle shining secrecies,” many more melodious witnesses might be produced. But it is not this alone that makes the songs of Watts so vital, that gives them such instant access to our hearts, and establishes them so

abidingly there. He is the most vivid setter forth of things divine; the most *direct* exalter of God. In this greatest happiness of a sacred singer his genius is singularly happy. His imagination, though ardent and impetuous, never indulges itself too long. We may sometimes accuse it of excess of daring, and extravagance, but it never deserts the theme, or overshadows the thing it would adorn; never seduces the worshipper from the object of contemplation and reverence. His figures are never injuriously prolonged, do not extend themselves into feebleness. His metaphors never set up for themselves. With what close fidelity they attend upon their duty, how submissive is their sweetness, how obedient their beauty, the lines below sufficiently declare.

“My God, the spring of all my joys,  
The life of my delight,  
The glory of my brightest days,  
And comfort of my nights;  
In darkest shades if Thou appear  
My dawning is begun;  
Thou art my soul's sweet morning Star,  
And Thou my Rising Sun.”

The chief fault with which his imagery is chargeable is its occasional amorousness: of a heart most tender and passionate, yet never a husband, he spent all his ardency upon the Saviour. Religion became to him in very truth a passion. Not in vain did he sing

“Devotion shall be all my heart,  
And all my passion, Love.”

With him celestial love sings sometimes in the fashion of earthly love, and learns its way of speaking: he bestows upon Christ what properly appertains to the Mistress. This amorousness of expression is most conspicuous in the Lyrics—witness the following:

“Sweet muse, descend and bless the shade,  
And bless the evening grove,  
Business, and noise, and day are fled,  
And every care but love.

But hence, ye wanton young and fair ;  
 Mine is a purer flame ;  
 No Phillis shall infect the air  
 With her unhallowed name.

Jesus has all my powers possessed—  
 My hopes, my fears, my joys ;  
 He the dear sovereign of my breast  
 Shall still command my voice.

I'll carve my passion on the bark ;  
 And every wounded tree  
 Shall drop and bear some mystic mark  
 That Jesus died for me."

Not a few similar utterances of affection are scattered about the "*Horæ Lyricæ*." These Lyrics were the offspring of his youth ; daring and ardent, they reveal the age of the writer. There is about them (such at least as Religion inspires) an exceeding fervour and tenderness, a boldness, a bravery of expression that signalize no other short divine songs—an intense idea of the glory of the theme—a panting after things divine truly irrestrainable, a mounting toward them indeed sublime, an absorption in them almost seraphic. They are in truth *devout* songs. Never surely did holy affection more richly utter itself, never was resignation more sweetly eloquent than in "a Sight of Heaven in Sickness."

"Oft have I sat in secret sighs  
 To feel my flesh decay ;  
 Then groaned aloud with frightened eyes  
 To view the tottering clay.

But I forbid my sorrows now ;  
 Nor dares the flesh complain ;  
 Diseases bring their profit too,  
 The joy o'ercomes the pain.

My cheerful soul now all the day,  
 Sits waiting here and sings ;  
 Looks thro' the ruins of her clay,  
 And practises her wings.

Faith almost changes into sight  
 When from afar she spies  
 Her fair inheritance in light  
 Above created skies.

Had but the prison-walls been strong,  
And firm, without a flaw,  
In darkness she had dwelt too long,  
And less of glory saw.

But now the Everlasting Hills  
Thro' every chink appear ;  
And something of the joy she feels,  
While she's a prisoner here.

The shines of Heaven rush sweetly in  
At all the gaping flaws ;  
Visions of endless bliss are seen,  
And native airs she draws.

O may these walls stand tottering still,  
The breaches never close—  
If I must here in darkness dwell  
And all this glory lose.

Or rather let this flesh decay—  
The ruins wider grow,  
Till, glad to see the enlarged way,  
I stretch my pinions through."

Familiar with sickness as few have been, he had special opportunities of patience and resignation, and special right and power to give them utterance. And have not we the right of asking—when has sickness been ever thus glorified? when has poetry been more pious, or piety more poetical?

Save this sweetest "Sight of Heaven in Sickness," the chief excellence of the "*Horæ Lyricæ*" lies in songs of praise, in glorifying the All-glorious, in magnifying the Almighty, in humblest, yet bravest endeavours to express the Ineffable, to praise Him beyond all praise. These antitheses exactly set forth these remarkable hymns. These songs of praise are in fact a perpetual proclamation of their own impotence—a declaration that God cannot be praised.

"Who dares attempt the Eternal Name  
With notes of mortal sound?  
Danger and glory guard the theme  
And spread despair around.

\* \* \* \* \*

In Thee what endless wonders meet !  
 What various glory shines ?  
 The crossing rays too fiercely beat  
 Upon our fainting minds.

Thy works the strongest Seraph sings  
 In a too feeble strain,  
 And labours hard on all his strings  
 To reach Thy thoughts in vain.

Created Powers—how weak they be !  
 How short *our* praises fall !  
 So much akin to nothing we,  
 And Thou the Eternal All."

In the "Hymns and Spiritual Songs," the next assembly of melodious utterances that Watts provided for Christian souls, he stands forth as the poet of all Christian occasions, and not least conspicuously as the "Poet of Praise." But the praise offered here is of a different sort from that presented in the "*Horæ Lyricæ*." The celebration here is more particular, more specific. Single mercies are dwelt upon, the daily incidents, the special concerns of the Christian Life, have all and each their appropriate song. From this teeming treasury of confession and thanksgiving are drawn the hymns quoted above. The strain of the "Hymns and Spiritual Songs" is tender, passionate and earnest as that of the "*Horæ Lyricæ*," occasionally amorous too. They very exactly express the belief of most of the Puritans of Watts' day, and continue still the favourite utterance of the Calvinistic Dissenters. But though perhaps frequently too theological, they almost always contrive to be poetical ; and many, very many, of them, will delight the devotion of all ages, and all Churches. Their great, their almost exclusive, theme is the Redemption of Christ. The Saviour is set forth in every conceivable way : the various attitudes of his mighty, his everlasting love, are all caught and brought most touchingly and tenderly before our eyes ; all manner of affection is expressed towards him—all manner of honour devised for him ; his work, his life, his cross, his tomb, are most cunningly glorified. Witness that summoning of all the beauty and riches of Nature to adorn and enrich him—



that gathering together of every glorious image wherewith the Book of Life has endeavoured to express the Lord.

“Go, worship at Emmannel’s feet,  
See in his face what glories meet :  
Earth is too narrow to express  
His worth, his glory, or his grace.

The whole creation can afford  
But some faint shadows of my Lord ;  
Nature, to make his beauties known,  
Must mingle colours not her own.

Is he compared to wine or bread ?  
Dear Lord, our souls would thus be fed ;  
That flesh, that dying blood of thine,  
Is bread of life—is heavenly wine.

Is he a Rose ? not Sharon yields  
Such fragranciness in all her fields ;  
Or if the Lily he assume,  
The vallies bless the rich perfume.

Is he a Rock ? how firm he proves !  
The Rock of Ages never moves !  
Yet the sweet streams that from him flow  
Attend us all the desert through.

Is he a Temple ? I adore  
The indwelling Majesty and power,  
And still to that most Holy Place  
Whene’er I pray I turn my face.

Is he a Star ? he breaks the night,  
Piercing the shades with morning light ;  
I know his glories from afar ;  
I know the bright—the Morning Star.

Is he a Sun ? his beams are grace,—  
His course is joy and righteousness ;  
Nations rejoice when he appears  
To chase their clouds and dry their tears.”

The work of Watts’ middle age was the Imitation of the Psalms ; perhaps his master-work—perhaps the greatest kindness ever done an assembly of Christian souls. There is a greater richness and glory over many of his earlier

songs. Imagination is stronger and more absolute in the Lyrics and Hymns. The Psalms are fortunate for peculiar elegance and harmony of expression. They are not chargeable with the extravagances which some may now and then quarrel with in his after-poems, while the same depth and intensity and tenderness await us here. There is a most fond and faithful, yet a most *Christian* following of David. All the great king's passionate supplication, rapturous thanksgiving, and unfathomable remorse, live and glow and burn over again in Watts. The intense, earnest soul is all there; but the Jew has departed. Watts has made these glorious utterances sovereignly and most sweetly Christian. Every special piece of Judaism has been removed for some fair Christian peculiarity to smile in its place. Over the coarser, harsher, more carnal portions of David's nature, he has poured wonderful refinement and spirituality. The Psalmist's enemies become *our sins*; *his* revenge is *our* self-reproach; *his* imprecation of misfortune upon a cruel and impious foe is *our* invocation of purity upon a stained soul. Earthly wishes grow into heavenly aspirations. With no Psalm does Watts deal more happily than with Psalm cxxxviii., which begins thus—"I will praise thee with my whole heart; before the Gods will I sing praises unto thee: I will worship towards thy holy temple:" and stands thus with Watts:—

"With all my powers of heart and tongue  
I'll praise my Maker in my song:  
Angels shall hear the notes I raise,  
Approve the song, and *join* the praise—  
Angels,—that make thy Church their care,  
Shall witness my devotion there;  
While holy zeal directs my eyes  
To thy fair temple in the skies."

What a delightful expansion—what an exquisite exaltation of the sentiment is here! Is not David sometimes bettered here? He has equal reason to bless his imitator in Psalm lxxi., where his gratitude sings, "Thou art my hope, O Lord God: Thou art my trust from my youth up. By Thee have I been holden up even from the womb: my praise shall be continually of Thee. I am as a wonder unto many. Thou art my strong refuge. Let my mouth

be filled with thy praise and thy honour all the day. Cast me not off in the time of old age: forsake me not when my strength faileth." Now for Watts.

"My God, my everlasting hope,  
I live upon thy truth:  
Thy hands have held my childhood up,  
And strengthened all my youth.

My flesh was fashioned by thy power,  
With all these limbs of mine;  
And since my mother's painful hour,  
I've been entirely thine.

Still has my life new wonders seen  
Repeated every year:  
Behold the days that yet remain—  
I trust them to thy care.

Cast me not off when strength declines,  
When hoary hairs arise;  
And round me let thy glories shine  
Whene'er thy servant dies.

Then in the history of my age,  
When men review my days,  
They'll read thy love in every page,  
In every line thy praise."

These three Psalms are no happy exceptions; most of the others are as freely yet loyally imitated—all the native might, all the original glory, preserved and *enhanced* by a most gracious and harmonious mingling of Christianity.

Disallowed of critics, and unrecognised of literature, Watts has won a nobler life than is in their gift—done a work far beyond their praise. He has done more than entertain the fancy, or inform the mind; he has been, if ever man was, a builder up and nourisher of souls; master of man in his holiest and most awful hours. He has met us hardly out of the cradle, and guided us along our way to the very gate of Heaven. From him Childhood has learned piety—Worship drawn fresh life and sanctity—and dying-beds caught a new and surprising glory. Than him in these latter times Heaven has known no mightier helper upon Earth. He can stand without the critic's prop.

But shall not the day come when Criticism shall stretch out its arms, not in patron guise, but reverently towards this slighted one—when Literature shall be proud to acknowledge and adorn him—when England shall confess that he has done a noble work, and give the honour due to one of her mighty sons?

In the only recent publication that helps to head this article, the "*Anthologia Davidica*," there is nothing peculiarly significant as to the progress and present state of Sacred Poetry: the work is a modest, laborious and well-deserving attempt by a Clergyman of the Church of England to form as perfect a metrical Version of the Psalms as may be, from the endeavours of the most successful of the very many who have lent these greatest of Sacred Poems the dress of English Poetry. The anonymous Editor is thoroughly acquainted with the subject, and has evidently spent much time and pains upon the work; the book contains a list of sixty-five entire and more than a hundred partial versions. What wonderful power, what everlasting attraction, resides in these awful utterances! Genius of the highest order, ability of the humblest soul, faith of every complexion, have alike felt the strong allurements, alike yielded to the temptation of translating the Psalmist. The great aim of the present Editor is to present the Psalms as near to the original as a good metrical version can make them; to secure exact translation, he carefully avoids all imitations, all versions which seek to spiritualise the Psalms, cast out the Judaism, lay Christian hands on David. So that when he introduces Watts, the Coryphæus of the Spiritualisers, he lays Hebrew hands upon him—the Puritan restores the Judaism, brings back the Psalm to David. Many mighty spirits, and some fine poems are gathered together here. "A member of the University of Oxford" (Mr. Keble, we believe) has done good service; Psalm lxxxv. is most worthily rendered by him.\* But we feel persuaded that this demand of exact translation, ministers neither to noble poetry or noble worship. Single Psalms may remain in all fulness—our Songs Divine;

\* The Editor introduces the beautiful rendering of Psalms xlv. and lxxi. by the Countess of Pembroke, and might well have taken more from the noble Sidneian version—the joint endeavour of the peerless Sir Philip and his sister.

but we cannot receive them altogether; cannot endure a strict translation of them in our worship. But the spirit of the Psalms may well pass into Christian worship. If they may not wholly be our hymns, yet our hymns should breathe of them. This is the peculiar happiness of Watts' Imitation; his Psalms, without being those of David, breathe their very breath. He mingled souls with David, made all possible appropriation, caught all the glory that would come, which was not a little; for there existed a sublime kindred between them. Each had a deep Inner Life, a widely-believed religion to express. And naturally did the Hebrew pour himself into the Puritan: right graciously did the intense utterer of one great spirituality lend himself to the earnest utterer of another still more mighty.

It is true of all great popular Sacred Poets, as of David and Watts, that they both reveal themselves and give expression to the religion prevalent around them, belong to their own age and to all ages. The hymns, wherein they pour forth the depths of their soul, their own Inner Life, we clasp as eternal utterances; these speak to the soul at once and for ever. The hymns which seek to exalt a particular form of spirituality then powerful, thereby receive a limit, become partial, historical. Great indeed is the historical worth and significance of Sacred Poetry. A Church-History might be woven almost from the Songs of Sion. Every potent spirituality has created its own Poetry—Poetry, rich, mighty, glorious, in proportion to the intensity with which the religion has been holden, to the sway it has won over men's hearts: according to that most true saying of the Countess of Pembroke in her glorious rendering of Psalm cxxxix.,

“ Needs in my praise thy works must shine,  
So only them my thoughts have felt :”

so that we may in some measure judge a religion by its poetry; and if its Hymns be few and feeble, pronounce it to be wanting in power: the greatness of a spirituality has a faithful witness in the grandeur of the Hymns which it has inspired. Look at the great Hebrew faith and its company of glorious Psalms. We have been earnest to show what a right worthy utterer did awful Puritanism, “ that

culmination of Protestantism," as Carlyle calls it, find in Watts. Some of his Hymns must have been too intense for his generation, and were just too late for the intense Cromwellian age; calling for the saintly warriors to start up again and sing them. Methodism did not lack a sweet singer; Charles Wesley was ready with his noble genius to help it to harmonious utterance.

The Church of England, well defined as a compromise between jarring spiritualities, has of necessity been deficient in great Hymns, has required some one conviction to get peculiar strength for a true Sacred Poet, like Herbert and Keble, to appear. In its most languid state during the last century it has not we believe given birth to one Hymn worth remembering. The circumstances attending the birth of Unitarianism, that recoil from the extravagance of other Churches in doctrine and feeling, and its generally unaspiring, unimpassioned and purely rational character, have of course effectually hindered it from inspiring any great Sacred Poetry.

We will make an end of this (we fear) too long article by venturing to declare that, notwithstanding the countless great and glorious hymns that Christianity has hitherto produced, we do not despair of a nobler Sacred Poetry than ever yet has been, to be born of the liberal intense Catholic Christianity which is slowly and quietly springing up. Rich indeed and ever-flowing will be the fount of Inspiration open to Genius, when Intellect dwells in full harmony with Religion, when Faith and Love have kissed one another.

## ART. IV.—ACTON'S SERMONS.

*Sermons by the late Rev. Henry Acton, of Exeter, with a Memoir of his Life.* Edited by the Rev. William James, and the Rev. J. Reynell Wreford, F.S.A. London: Chapman, 1846.

It is not often that we review *Sermons*, for they are a species of communication with the public, which we are decidedly of opinion are, for the most part, better carried on by means of the ear and the heart than the eye and the judgment. The *matter* of Sermons is, besides, now reaching us in more attractive forms: and the *manner*, the earnest, possessed and speaking address, has come to constitute so great a portion of the influence of this kind of ministration to the public wants, that we can seldom recognise the original thing, except by a very faint likeness, in the printed portrait that is presented to us. This, too, is an age impatient of the treatment of *subjects* in sermons. It cannot, as Coleridge says, carry in its head a long sentence, but must have it cut down into short portions, and so, the thorough, exact, and studied treatment of a whole subject in one sermon, is a matter which, to most modern audiences, occasions groanings that cannot be uttered. When it is attempted to convey information in Sermons, it is astonishing (if they are to preserve the character of Sermons) how little they will carry, and how diluted that little, too, becomes. Couard's Sermons, on the "Life of Christians during the First Three Centuries of the Church," founded principally on Neander's History, though excellent of their kind, are an illustration of this want of material, bulk and fulness, and, perhaps, the same principle may, in part, account for the poverty of such productions as Dr. Ireland's Lectures on Christianity and Paganism compared. We are curious also to see whether Mr. Maurice's Boyle Lectures do not confirm this impression.

The consequence is, that the most effective preachers now give up the idea of treating subjects in the ordinary course of their services, reserving the discussion of them for times when special occasions, or a well-chosen audience, offer them the guarantee of greater patience and more thought: and they usually take up points rather than subjects—fix



upon some one important idea, and work this up into a temporary prominence—trusting to the result effected by a succession of such services for the totality of a just and comprehensive impression. Indeed, what else can weekly Preachers do, when the adequate treatment of almost any one of the subjects they select, in order to be satisfactory to themselves, would require at least a month's study and digestion?

But the Sermons before us are fit to be published—indeed perhaps almost more so than to be delivered. They are emphatically comprehensive—well-laboured—well-digested—well-arranged—well-defined—and as far as the grasp of the preacher's own mind (which was a thoughtful and a manly one) extended, they are Sermons that are exhaustive of their topics. They are a worthy monument of Mr. Acton's powers. It is intimated in the memoir prefixed to them, that the Author was fonder of his study than of morning calls among his people. And if the Sermons are at all a sample of his usual style of preaching, the fact would be evident enough from themselves. If we had the dates of their composition, we feel as if we could almost follow the course of his studies, in reference to them. Thus we should say—he had not improbably been reading Lorenz Bauer, when he prepared the Sermon on “The supposed or apparent contradictions respecting God in the Old Testament”—that the great work of Benjamin Constant was engaging his attention when he wrote the Sermons on “The inward spiritual nature of man compared with his outward spiritual history.”

But neither in these nor in any other of the Sermons is there the slightest pedantic reference to the study-lamp. He had evidently gathered up his materials, from whatever source derived, into the garner of his own mind, and they came forth from thence as treasures of his own careful gathering, and wise selection. Indeed we should suppose that few of the Sermons were written except by considerable effort, and that he usually had to gird up his loins to a subject, as necessarily requiring all the powers he could bring to bear upon it. There is little spontaneity—no gushing warmth—no ready flow about them. They are all cast in the same type. They all open in the same way—with a direct reference to the words of the text.

They are all well-proportioned, and logically developed. They are directed to the Reason and the Conscience—and manly, impressive, thoughtful compositions they are. The last, though written in the same dignified and high-wrought strain as the others, partakes less of the student-character than many others, and more of the soul in communion with itself. But it is the soul of a lofty and self-sustained man. He still does not speak from observation of the world without—it is still the Christian Thinker in his own closet. We cannot doubt, by the remarkable coincidence of the subject and the manner of treating it, that the hand of Death was on him as he wrote, and that though he might not recognise them, the mysterious præmonitions of that dread power had taken hold of the frame, and were directing the thoughts of his mind. We could quote very largely from these Sermons; but we think they will be widely read—at least by all who knew anything of the Author. They indicate more power of maturing thought, than of originating thought: and suggestive as they are in themselves, and full as they are of wisdom, and the most acute and thoughtful discrimination, they do not to men of the same school introduce anything decidedly new. Of *Sermons* indeed we know of none like them. As such, they are certainly *sui generis*. The Sermon we have mentioned “on the spiritual history of man,” and the first, “on the similarity of human nature in the souls of all mankind,” indicate the large spirit in which the author studied, and could bring before his audience, the philosophy of religion—and the last Sermon, “on being faithful unto death,” is the most impressive and improving in a practical sense. We point attention especially to these—because to those who only knew Mr. Acton as the able opponent of the Rev. Daniel Bagot, (while the latter was in the midst of his crusade against Heretics and Infidels, and before he had taken the quiet Jerusalem of his living in Ireland,)—these Sermons will exhibit his powers in a new and wider field. We commend the whole volume—with its interesting and touching memoir—and its massive and thoughtful sermons—to all readers of grave things. It adds to the reputation and character of the Author, which was high while he lived. The Denomination to which Henry Acton belonged has reason to be proud of him.

## ART. V.—EUCLID'S ELEMENTS OF GEOMETRY.

*Euclid's Elements of Geometry*, chiefly from the text of Dr. Simson, with explanatory notes; together with a Selection of Geometrical Exercises from the Senate-house and College Examination Papers: to which is prefixed, an Introduction, containing a brief outline of the History of Geometry. By Robert Potts, M.A., Trinity College. London: John W. Parker, 445, West Strand.

THIS valuable work having lately issued from the press, we gladly avail ourselves of the earliest opportunity of making a few remarks upon it, and on the subject of which it treats.

The principal new feature of the work consists in this, that it affords a kind of *ocular analysis* of the proof of every proposition in the Elements of Euclid; the text being so arranged as "to exhibit to the eye of the student the successive steps of the demonstrations, and thus to facilitate his apprehension of the reasoning." In other respects the text differs little from that of Dr. Simson, except that the process of reasoning is in many instances slightly abridged, and all unnecessary repetition in the language of the demonstrations is avoided. These alterations, however, are so slight as, in no instance, to injure the true spirit of the original. The author has used extreme caution in interfering with a work which, for so many centuries, has been held in the highest estimation in almost all civilized countries; and has accordingly reserved for the notes all suggestions relative to alterations in the text.

The notes appended to each book contain, in a very clear and concise form, many valuable remarks on the fundamental conceptions, definitions, axioms, postulates, and propositions of elementary Geometry. The connection between number and magnitude is also carefully discussed on every proper occasion. The notes on the second book contain an excellent development of the simplest notions relative to the application of Algebra to Geometry,

including algebraical demonstrations of all the propositions in the second book. In the notes to the fifth book the conceptions of Arithmetical and Geometrical Ratios are carefully distinguished, and the definitions are explained and illustrated at considerable length. In our judgment the Author might have here improved his book by establishing algebraically, in a condensed form, the principal propositions in the theory of proportion; as by substituting this for the accurate but prolix method given by Euclid, the student would be enabled to save time which might be more advantageously devoted to other researches.

The introduction contains an interesting sketch of the history of Geometry, in which the Author gives a concise account of the origin of the science, and the names of the men to whom we are indebted for the principal improvements and discoveries. In this outline the Author confines himself principally to the ancient and middle eras of Geometry, as being more intimately connected with his subject; but he has also added a few brief notices of the modern Geometry. The Author has also illustrated the nature and application of the ancient Geometrical Analysis. In addition to its own intrinsic excellence, this method possesses the additional interest of being the discovery of PLATO himself. It is principally used in the solution of problems. The problem, when submitted to analysis, is at first assumed so be solved, and from this assumption a train of consequences is deduced, and continued by the ingenuity of the Geometer until he arrives at a proposition previously known to be possible or impossible. Thus the final conclusion shows whether the question be possible or impossible, and by retracing the steps of the analysis a synthetic solution is easily obtained. The work terminates with a most valuable collection of problems and theorems, from the Senate-house and College examination papers, a few of which are accompanied with solutions.

The Elements of Euclid seem unquestionably to afford the best initiatory exercise of the reasoning faculty. They investigate the properties of quantities almost tangible, presented not merely to the mind, but also to the eye of the student. Every step of the demonstration refers to some line, angle, surface or solid, which is to a certain ex-

tent visibly exhibited ; and the proposition is made to depend on one or more propositions previously established by means of the clearest principles. This lucid development of facts is undoubtedly a wholesome exercise to the mind, more especially of a beginner, and there is no reason to suppose that the habits of thought thus acquired are incapable of being applied to other branches of knowledge. This important fact appears to have been distinctly seen and recognised by PLATO, who is accordingly said to have placed the following inscription over the door of his school :—

Οὐδείς ἀγεωμέτρητος εἰσίτω.

To prepare the student for entering the higher regions of Geometry is another important instance of the utility of Euclid's Elements. To do this with advantage, the simplest properties of lines, angles, and figures, must be carefully engraved on the mind. When, however, this object is properly accomplished, we would by no means recommend the student to follow out the subject through the immense details of Apollonius and Pappus and the other great geometers of antiquity. The ancient Geometry proceeds upon no general methods. It consists of propositions arbitrarily put together and connected by no general law. It investigates special properties only of individual figures, always employing different processes peculiar to each figure. Thus the method of drawing a tangent to one curve furnishes no clue to the solution of the same problem for a different curve, and the same is true with respect to the more difficult problems of Rectification and Quadrature. Hence we cease to feel the surprise which naturally arises from the fact, that from the time of Euclid, Archimedes, and Apollonius, till about the middle of the seventeenth century, an interval of nearly two thousand years, the science of Geometry made no very considerable progress. The application of Algebra, however, at once removes these defects. It determines uniform and general rules for investigating the properties of all curves and surfaces whatever, and even supplies the place of invention by exhibiting curves and surfaces in infinite variety, the properties of which may afford matter for geometrical investigation. Every surface, described according to any given law, is expressed by an equation between three variables,

deducible from that law, and is thus brought under the dominion of Algebra. This equation may be considered as a short formula, in which all the properties of the surface are embodied, and from which the analyst is able to deduce them by fixed rules, not peculiar to any particular surface, but applicable alike to all. In many cases, indeed, a single equation represents an immense group of surfaces; and hence the investigation of any property of a particular surface leads directly to the similar or analogous properties of an infinite variety of other surfaces. To Algebra we are also indebted for the classification of curves and surfaces into different orders. The importance of this classification will appear in a striking point of view by considering the narrow limits within which the knowledge of the greatest geometers of antiquity, relative to surfaces of the second order only, was probably confined.

ART. VI.—PATTERSON'S ZOOLOGY.

*Introduction to Zoology: for the Use of Schools.* By Robert Patterson, Vice-President of the Natural History and Philosophical Society of Belfast. Part I. Invertebrate Animals. London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co. Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd. Dublin: John Cumming. Belfast: Simms & M'Intyre.

WE are informed by the Author of the above work, that it was undertaken with the view of having the study of Natural History introduced as a branch of school education, and certainly he has succeeded admirably in bringing within the comprehension of youths of ordinary acquirements, all that is needful to be known on the subject, and to excite a desire of a still more extensive view into this department of science. He has moreover accomplished his object, for the book has already been received as a Class-book by the National Board of Education in Ireland, and by some well-known establishments for the education of youth in this country.

We are glad to give our hearty approval to the undertaking.

The Author adopts the system of Cuvier, beginning with animals of the simplest formation, and ascending to those the most perfect. The present volume is confined to that great division of the animal kingdom termed the Invertebrate.

In every instance where it is in his power to illustrate his subject by British specimens, he does so; and he thus introduces us to a more familiar acquaintance with many of our old friends, with whom we have formed an intimacy in our country walks and strolls along the sea-beach.

The language is clear and perspicuous, and he reconciles the reader to the use of scientific terms which are unavoidable in the study of the subject. He says:—

“The use of scientific terms has something in it very repulsive to the young naturalist. But this often arises from the terms being



used without any precise idea of their meaning being conveyed to the mind of the learner. When any term is thoroughly understood, there is an end of the difficulty; and the word once known, is not readily forgotten.

“By such means, we can indicate to a person in a remote country, and speaking a foreign language, the very animal regarding which we have any fact to communicate; and, in like manner, we can know with certainty of what animal observations made in other parts of the world are recorded. The terms of science are common to the men of science in all countries; and, if the terms be correctly applied, no doubt or ambiguity can arise. They furnish us with the means of expressing the ideas we wish to convey, with a precision otherwise unattainable; and the habitual use of them assists in giving precision to the ideas themselves, and thus forms a help in that mental process which the mind of the naturalist must undergo in the acquisition of knowledge.”

The Author, in treating of any particular group of animals, often avails himself of the opportunity of showing its importance to man, and never allows a popular error to pass uncorrected. Speaking of the *Medusæ* he says,—

“We may mention an anecdote which we learned from an eminent zoologist, now a professor in one of the English universities. He had, a few years ago, been delivering some zoological lectures in a seaport town in Scotland, in the course of which he had adverted to some of the most remarkable points in the economy of the *Acalephæ*.

“After the lecture, a farmer who had been present came forward, and inquired if he had understood him correctly, as having stated that the *Medusæ* contained so little of solid material, that they might be regarded as little else than a mass of animated sea-water? On being answered in the affirmative, he remarked, that it would have saved him many a pound had he known that sooner, for he had been in the habit of employing his men and horses in carting away large quantities of jelly-fish from the shore, and using them as manure on his farm, and he now believed they could have been of little more real use than an equal weight of sea-water.

“Assuming that so much as one ton weight of *Medusæ* recently thrown on the beach had been carted away in one load, it will be found that, according to the experiments of Professor Owen already mentioned, the entire quantity of solid material would be only about four pounds of avoirdupois weight, an amount of solid material which, if compressed, the farmer might, with ease, have carried home in one of his coat pockets.”

Independent of its usefulness as a school-book, we should recommend it to parents visiting the sea-shore in the summer holidays, and we can promise that they will find in it an explanation of many phenomena which they might otherwise have difficulty in comprehending—and hints for the observation of some of the lower forms of animal life which they would pass by unnoticed.

“The cheapness of the pleasures which natural history affords should of itself form a reason for the general cultivation of such pursuits. They are within the reach of the most humble, and are not dependent upon costly or complicated apparatus. By means so simple as a glass of sea water, we have caused the *Balan*i or acorn-shells to exhibit a series of movements, which we have never shown to the youth of either sex, without hearing from them expressions of the most unfeigned delight. Let the reader try the experiment. Go at low water to a rock on the beach, choose a few of the oldest and largest limpets, left uncovered by the receding tide, and encrusted by the acorn-shells. As the enclosed animals have then been without nourishment for two or three hours, they will be quite ready for another meal. Throw the limpet-shells into the glass of sea water, and in a minute or two the acorn-shells upon them will begin to open. Presently a beautiful feathered apparatus will be extended, then withdrawn. It will again be put forth, and again retracted; but with such grace, regularity and precision, that the eye regards it ‘with ever new delight.’ And when the same exquisite mechanism is exhibited by every one of them, either in succession or simultaneously, and when we consider that it thus ministers at the same moment, both to respiration and nutrition, a train of ideas is excited, which rises from the humble shell to Him by whom it has thus wondrously been fashioned.”

The book is profusely adorned with exquisite illustrations, which may be depended upon for their correctness; and it is published at a very moderate price.

## ART. VII.—NATIONAL EDUCATION.

1. *On the means of rendering more efficient the Education of the People: a Letter to the Lord Bishop of St. David's.* By W. F. Hook, D.D.
2. *Letters to the Right Honourable Lord John Russell, on State Education.* By Edward Baines, Jun.
3. *Popular Education in England.* By Robert Vaughan, D.D.
4. *Companion to the Almanac.* 1847. *Progress of Education in England.*
5. *Minutes of Committee of Council of Education.* 1844-1846.

THE first step towards a National provision for the Education of the People must be to establish *the necessity*, to make it clear that the supply derivable from existing and reliable sources is hopelessly short of the demands, and still more so of the wants, of the Country. Mr. Baines with too much of a catch-word oratory, apt enough for exciting prejudice and enlisting ignorant antipathies, which characterizes too large a part of his pleadings on what he calls State Education, and has influenced him in the selection of that title, calls this necessity 'the tyrant's and the robber's plea.' We had supposed it was *their own* necessities, which served the tyrant and the robber as an excuse for oppression and plunder. Whilst 'Necessity' for a national provision for Education means only, that a good thing, a benevolent thing, a righteous thing, a religious thing, on which depend the future well-being and glory of the great English people, *can* be accomplished in no other way than by a national instrumentality. Mr. Baines has a full right to dispute the fact; there may be no such necessity; but to call the *only* means, for that is the supposition, of effecting the greatest blessing that can be given to a people, and of effecting it too by the constitutional consent of the people, 'the tyrant's and the robber's plea,' is not worthy of his practised intellect, nor likely to avail much with the illustrious nobleman to

whom his Letters are superscribed. Yet this is the kind of writing that makes partizans ; and unfortunately it is a kind of writing in which England abounds. Mr. Baines' Letters though directed to Lord John Russell, are not addressed to *him*.

Astounding diversities of statement and opinion, threatening one's faith in figures, are put forth just now upon these two points, 1st, the difference between the existing amount of School accommodation and the amount required to meet fully the wants of the present population ; 2nd, the annual extension of School accommodation required to provide for the constantly growing wants of an increasing population.

If the population increased by a constant quantity, if the same number of souls were yearly born in England, then each year would furnish precisely the same number of children requiring for the first time accommodation in our Schools,—and if the School provision was once adequately adjusted to the population, it would remain right for ever, because the number annually seeking admission to the lowest form would also, death apart, be the number annually dismissed from the highest into the world. But population does not increase by a constant quantity ; each year shows a large addition to the increase of the former year, and it is just to the extent of this amount of increase of year upon year, that our School accommodation, supposing it to be right for any one year, would yet have to undergo an annual expansion. Thus supposing that each year England, with its present increase made constant, furnished 400,000 children of an age to be placed under instruction for the first time, which is not far from the truth ;—then whatever number of years is fixed upon for the proper duration of Education, by that number must you multiply 400,000, to give, death again apart, the whole number of children that ought *always* to be found in the Schools of the Country. If ten years are taken as the proper period of School-life, then for this very year we *ought* to have accommodation for nearly four millions of Children, which is about the number now existing between the ages of five and fifteen ; each year one-tenth of these would have their education completed and vacate, leaving their room for the 400,000 annually rising to the School altitude ; and be-

yond this, each succeeding year for ever would have to originate a new provision for the *excess* of the numbers arrived at the first year of their School-life, over the similar numbers of the year before. In these statements we have reference only to the increase of Children which each year arrive at an age ripe for instruction, and not to that increase on the whole population which is ascertained by striking a balance between the deaths and the births. Such averages are too rough for educational statistics; whoever may die *after* fifteen, it is the number that live up to and through the School-period that is alone important in this relation.

These principles of calculation have been strangely overlooked. Dr. Hook takes the annual increase of the population as 365,000, and assumes that to be the extent to which School-provision in this Country would have, every year, to be supplemented by a new expansion. There are more blunders in this than we have time to set right. In the first place it would be true that the annual permanent increase to the population was the measure to the annually required increase of School-accommodation, only upon the supposition that people went to School all the years of their lives, and that no place ever became vacant on a School-form except by death. Now, whatever may be fixed upon as the School-period of human life,—if it be from five to fifteen, then a tenth; if it be from five to twelve, then a seventh, of all the Children in School this year pass out of it, with the year, into the various Schools of daily work,—and by so doing make way for the whole of that yearly new accession of *instructible* Children, which proceeds from the permanent increase of the population. The other errors of Dr. Hook consist, 1st, in taking the difference between births and deaths as the measure of the permanent increase of Children, instead of the numbers that yearly arrive at the age when Education should commence, which is considerably *more* than 365,000; 2nd, in misstating the permanent increase to the population, taken on the difference between births and deaths, which is very considerably *less* than 365,000; and 3rd, in overlooking the only material consideration, the *excess* of births in each year over those of the year preceding.—Mr. Baines falls into similar errors. He takes the

increase of the population as 200,000 a year, and assigning one scholar to eight inhabitants, concludes 25,000 to be the annual increase of Scholars. But if our educational adjustments were once fully made, the annual increase of Scholars would be simply the difference between the number of Children then reaching the age of five, assuming that as the commencement of School-life, and the number who had reached the same age in the year before. All the rest would simply take the vacant places of those who had completed their School-course. This excess would be greatly *less* than 25,000, and clearly bears no constant ratio to the annual increase of the population, as measured by the difference between births and the deaths of persons of all ages. To suppose such a constant ratio implies that an increase of population depending, not on increase of births, but on a prolongation of life, would yet furnish a corresponding increase of Children to be educated. Mr. Baines, in fact, slides here into Dr. Hook's error of keeping those who *are* at School at School for ever, though he only consigns one in eight to the scholastic discipline. On no other supposition than that one in eight of the whole population go to school and *remain there till they die*, can one-eighth of the permanent increase of the population be regarded as the measure of additional School-accommodation annually required.

We shall now attempt to clear our way to a fair and moderate view of the important points of this great question; commencing with an estimate of what *ought* to be the Educational Condition of England and Wales; and proceeding to compare this with the extent, quality, and distribution of our existing School-provision. If a deficiency appears in quantity or in quality, or in both, we must also consider on what are our reliances for a future approximation to right condition.

1. The present population of England and Wales may be taken, in round numbers, as seventeen millions. How many of these are of an age to be found in Schools? And of all who from their age might be found at School, how many ought to be in actual attendance at any one time? The answer to the first of these questions will depend on the ages between which we suppose School-attendance to be distributed; and to the second, on what we suppose to

be the desirable length for the whole period of School-life. From five to fifteen has been regarded by common consent as that portion of life, within which, either extending over the whole of it, or attaching to some part of it, elementary education is comprised. We omit for the present the consideration of Infant Schools, which, however, ought not to affect the question. Now if it is a desirable thing, and in the Social Condition of the country a practicable thing, that the education of every child should extend over the whole of these years, if every child from five to fifteen should be under instruction, then the proper duration of School-life is fixed at ten years, and the accommodation required will on calculation be found to be an educational provision for (to give exact numbers) 3,881,950 Scholars. But ten years may be considered an unreasonable, or, in the circumstances of the country, an impossible term. What reduction can we make upon it without destroying the efficiency of the Education imparted,—so as not, by impairing its thoroughness and quality, to defeat its very object? An able writer in the Companion to the Almanac, for the present year, fixes upon seven years and a half as the shortest period that can be assigned for Education, without a sacrifice of its efficiency. But it must be remembered, if we take this as the average educational Period for *all* the children in the community, and make it the basis for a calculation of the School-accommodation required,—that as many children as attend the full term of ten years, which will be at least all belonging to the wealthier and middle class, occupy their places for two years and a half beyond the average, and so, with a given accommodation, practically reduce the School period of an equal number to five years. Now the number of scholars paying for their own education in private and respectable Schools, and to whom therefore the longer period may reasonably be assigned, is calculated to be upwards of a million, not including the large number educated in endowed Schools, and consequently, on a general average of seven years and a half, many more than a million of the children of the poorer class would practically be reduced to a period of five years. It is clear therefore that with no safety to the end contemplated, the efficient education of the great mass of the people, can a shorter term be



taken as a basis on which to calculate what ought to be the School provision of the country.

Assuming then, seven years and a half as the School-period, how many should we have under instruction, at the same time, out of a population of seventeen millions? According to the proportions of the Population Returns for 1841, the number of children between the ages of five and ten will now be 2,033,200, and the number between the ages of ten and fifteen, 1,848,750.\* To afford to each child an education of seven years and a half, we should have in School at one time the whole of the former number and the half of the latter, making a total of 2,957,575. Mr. Baines takes a School-period of five years as the basis from which to calculate the educational condition at which the Nation ought to aim, and consequently would require accommodation for only one half of the children between the ages of five and fifteen,—that is, from the above figures, for 1,940,975. Let us consider for a moment the state of things that would result, if we were to be satisfied with a School-provision only to this extent. In the first place, for every child who had a thorough education, a schooling of ten years, another child would be absolutely deprived of education; and for every child who attended seven years and a half, another child would be reduced to two years and a half, and so on,—accommodation being provided only for a moiety of the children between the ages of five and fifteen. But secondly, the number of children between the ages of five and ten are at present 2,033,200, which are just 92,225 more than could find places in the whole of that School-provision which Mr. Baines regards as sufficient for England. Will the country look upon this as an adequate supply for its educational wants,—a supply that would require to be supplemented by accommodation for nearly a hundred thousand Scholars before it could include even the children between the ages of five and ten,—leaving totally out of consideration all below the age of five, and all above the age of ten? And if the present state of things is as bad as this, or, as Mr. Baines admits it to be, much worse than this, then how can we be satisfied with the past workings of the Voluntary Principle? Or if we are satisfied with it in the arithmetical matter of

\* Companion to the Almanac, p. 24.

supply, how can we be satisfied with it in the moral matter of *demand*? And ought not the most anxious thoughts of the Nation to be directed to this question,—‘By what new agencies of supply and encouragement can the educational *requirements* of the country be expanded and stimulated?’

2. We have shown that we ought to have the means of education for at least 2,957,575 scholars. What is the amount of the *existing* supply? According to the Education Reports for 1833, known as Lord Kerry’s, there were then in attendance 1,187,493\* scholars of the ages usually found in Daily Schools. To these Mr. Baines very improperly adds 89,005 scholars in Infant Schools. By this means after reducing his *wants* by reckoning only from the ages between five and fifteen, he augments his *supply* by taking in an accommodation made for 89,005 children, for the most part below the age from which he begins to reckon his requirements. But we give him the addition, to make up for omissions in the Reports of 1833, and, granting him also a slight difference between his figures and our own, the source of which as he only gives the gross result we cannot trace, there appear in the Daily Schools of 1833, 1,276,947 children, out of a population which from the census of 1831 may be calculated at 14,169,026. These numbers give a proportion of something less than one scholar to eleven of the population,—whereas the desirable proportion, calculated on a schooling of seven years and a half, is about one to six.

In 1833 the Parliamentary Grants in aid of Education commenced. At first it was £20,000; in 1839 it was raised to £30,000, and committed to a new branch of the Administration, the Council on Education; in 1843 it was raised to £40,000; in 1845 it was £75,000; and in 1846, £100,000. So that since 1833 the country through its Representatives, including the grant of 1846, has been aiding Education to the extent of half a million of money. It is calculated by Dr. Hook that private contributions have been stimulated by, or have accompanied, these grants, to the extent of three times their amount; providing, on the whole, additional accommodation for 600,000

\* Companion to the Almanac, pp. 17 and 19, and Mr. Baines’ Letters, p. 33.

children. These calculations are adopted both by Mr. Baines, and by the author of the Article on the Progress of Education in the Companion to the Almanac, and may safely be taken as an approximation to the truth. We have therefore the following results :

Numbers at School in England and Wales	
in 1833 . . . . .	1,276,947
School-provision since 1833 for . . . .	600,000
In Workhouses* . . . . .	50,000
Estimated increase of <i>paying</i> Scholars in private Schools, since 1833† . . . .	250,000
Total . . . . .	2,176,947

This is conceding an existing provision for 317,551 more than Mr. Baines claims for. He, moreover, justly remarks that the new and improved Schools established since 1833 must have swallowed up some of the inferior Schools previously existing; but he makes no deduction from his estimated supply for this probability. Neither shall we claim any; let it also go to fill up the omissions which are said to exist in Lord Kerry's Returns.—Let us now strike the balance between the Accommodation existing and the Accommodation required :

School Provision required for . . . . .	2,957,575
School Provision existing for . . . . .	2,176,947

<i>Present Deficiency</i> in the School Accom- modation of England . . . . .	780,628
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3. Now what is the power of the Voluntary Principle to make good this large deficiency? Suppose that, with Government aid, it accomplish as much in the next thirteen years as it accomplished in the last. It would then have provided accommodation for 600,000 more. But this new supply would come gradually; in the first year abstracting only about 46,000, from the 780,628 who are now schoolless. Meanwhile each year, on an average of the six years from 1838 to 1844,‡ shows an increase of

\* See Companion to the Almanac, p. 19.

† These are returned in 1833, as 691,728.

‡ See Seventh Report of the Registrar General.

12,829 births over those of the year preceding; and this annual increase must also be provided for, in addition to the formidable amount of the existing arrears. At the end then of these thirteen years of slowly-growing improvement we should have the present deficiency of 780,628 augmented by (taking only the present average) 166,777, the accumulations of increase of year on year,—and reduced by 600,000, still leaving 347,405 children without the means of education in the year 1859. To this, for every year backwards from 1859 to 1846 we should have to add 46,000, to ascertain the larger deficiency of each receding year. Say that for each year of the thirteen, there is half a million of children without Schools,—an average below the truth. Now thirteen years comprise two School generations of six years and a half, which is a year and a half more than Mr. Baines contemplates, and consequently under the Voluntary Principle there will by 1859 be, at the lowest, a million of children thrown upon the world without any education at all, who might have had a schooling of six years and a half each, if by some powerful instrumentality the provision and the wants of the country were made at once commensurate. And if the existing supply is more thinly distributed, so that the whole injury shall not fall on any one person, then the Education of *all* is crippled, and its efficiency perilled.—But what reliance can there be that the Voluntary Principle will continue to work as it has done lately, inflamed and quickened by rivalry, jealousy, wounded self-consequence, proselyting zeal, sectarian pride, and a State-Church panic,—in addition to the pure perennial movements of its Christian love, on which alone we can repose for continuous service, but which stir only in the quiet, earnest, hearts of good and thoughtful men, and, alas, are of no avail to call forth the strained exertions, the suddenly expanded munificence, of a popular excitement? Can it be denied that a just dislike, with something too much of party scorn and hatred, of the arrogant pretensions of the Clergy, and an impatient resentment of the stupid simplicity of Home Secretaries, were in a large measure the stimulants of Dissenting activity, urging to spasmodic efforts, in order that when next the Church by the mouth of some accommodating Statesman claimed the Education of the Nation, they might be

able to rise up and say,—‘You are forestalled, the work is done already’?—And yet the work is not done. What confidence can we have that the constantly-growing burdens of popular Education will be permanently borne by motives of this nature? Will a zeal quickened by anything but love meet the necessities of the case? Can Satan cast out Satan? Are we to trust to the nettled demon of party spirit to exorcise the dumb demon of cloddish ignorance, and the fierce demon of brutal passion? Will the Independents, animated by another Sir James Graham, pledge themselves to raise another £100,000; and if they do, how far will it go to reduce the existing deficiency? Will the Methodists, under another slight from the Church, pledge themselves to raise another seven hundred Schools in another seven years? We wish the Church had rebuffed them sooner; for we are informed by Mr. Baines,\* that the Day and Infant Schools in connection with their body amounted in May last to 370, with 34,285 scholars. Yet under the inspiration of a cuff, they engage to raise 700 new Schools in seven years. If we are to be left to the Voluntary Principle then the best thing that can happen the country will be for the Home Secretary to create an occasional Nonconformist panic, by introducing an Education Bill conferring enormous privileges upon the Clergy. We know well that by the Dissenting body Education has been largely promoted from the purest principles, from a fraternal interest in the elevation of their fellow men,—but we agree with Dr. Vaughan in thinking, that it needs only a glance at the present condition of Education to arrive at the conclusion, that neither Church Zeal, nor Chapel Zeal, can originate the full provision required, distribute it properly, and for ever continue its sustenance, as it ought to be sustained in Teachers’ Salaries and School apparatus, bountifully. For if the Voluntary Principle can do all this, then why has it not done it? Surely no one has been staying its hand. And why after so many years of debate and strife, and vigorous exertion too, is the work still undone,—and the pressing question still the same, ‘How is the Education of the people to be accomplished?’

We might attempt to exhibit the existing deficiency in

\* Letters, p. 37.

Schools for the *labouring* classes, by separating the children of the wealthy and middle order from all between the ages of five and fifteen, and being content with Mr. Baines' five years' schooling for those who remained. The Returns of 1833 show 152,314 Scholars, educated by Endowment: the income of the Grammar or Higher Schools being £152,047; and the income of those of the endowed Schools not Classical, and therefore intended for the people, £141,385. We may therefore, considering that the larger part of the Education in Grammar Schools is not gratuitous, assign about one half of the Scholars connected with Endowments, or 76,157, to the wealthier classes. Add to these the 691,728 paying Scholars in private schools in 1833, and the estimated increase upon these since that time of 250,000, and we have a total of 1,017,885 under instruction, and not belonging to the labouring class. Subtract this from the whole number of children between the ages of five and fifteen, which is 3,881,950, and you have 2,864,065 of the children of the people. We shall require accommodation, at one time, for only one half of these, if their School-life is to last but for five years, that is for 1,432,032. Now the *existing* provision for the children of the people stands thus:—

One half of the endowed Schools . . . .	76,157
By subscription in 1833 . . . . .	165,436
By subscription and part payment in 1833 . . . . .	178,464
Accommodation since 1833 for . . . . .	650,000

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Total . . . 1,070,057

So that the provision required to give the Children of the people an education of five years is for 1,432,032, which, however, would always leave precisely the same number out of school, toiling or vagabond at those tender years; and the provision existing is for 1,070,057, showing a present deficiency, even on this reduced scale, for 361,975. *Supposing* the Voluntary Principle every year to provide new schools for 46,000 children, and to continue their bountiful sustenance for ever,—and thirteen thousand to be the present annual *excess* of those just attaining the age to commence their School-life, then it will require eleven years, or more than two school-generations, to fill up the

present deficiency. And *after* all this has been accomplished, a new yearly provision will still be required for the excess over the preceding year of those of an age to make their first appearance at the school doors,—which is now thirteen thousand, and will be an increasing quantity for ever.

4. The necessity for an organizing and regulating power, to direct a careful eye to the *whole* of the population, and to raise the character of our common schools, will be yet more apparent if we consider the defects of the Voluntary Principle, in the imperfect distribution of its forces, and in the low quality of the instruction it supplies. The present distribution is entirely accidental, depending not on the wants of the whole Nation but on the circumstances of special localities, on the general wealth of the inhabitants, the generosity of individuals, the rivalry of religious bodies,—resulting frequently in an excess for some districts, whilst others are left destitute. Often the first stimulus to Educational zeal is the desire of counteracting the influence, or the popularity, likely to be acquired by some church or chapel effort in the same direction; and two schools spring up where there was none before, not because the two are wanted, but because neither party must suffer itself to be outbid. An effort which the destitution of the people could not inspire, religious passions will immediately provoke. Within the last year a Sunday School was opened by a Dissenting Congregation in a large village in the neighbourhood of Liverpool. The Church took the alarm, retaliated with rival offers of instruction, canvassed the houses for pupils, and threatened parents and teachers with the pains and penalties which patronage in such districts has at command, if they countenanced the obnoxious school. This is to pollute Education at its springs, and to degrade it in the eyes of those for whose favours it canvasses, and who in fact become its patrons. No instruction so supplied can be conceived in a right spirit, or communicated with a right view. It has no respect, either, to the general wants of the people. It is merely a bid for popularity on its own ground, elicited by fear and contention. We should be glad to assign it to the more respectable, yet pernicious, motive of an excessive anxiety for the children's spiritual welfare, growing out of



some distrust of the entire soundness of their neighbours' theology, only that we are met by the startling fact, that this interest in their spiritual welfare never appeared before, and the Church school would never have been originated, had there been no Chapel school that required to be suppressed. We have not the least intention of implying that this spurious zeal is found in one party more than in another; it is found, in some form, in almost all parties, and it poisons a large part of the gratuitous instruction of the country. All Schools so originated and conceived should be labelled, 'Education on false pretences.' Voluntaryism, in its purest state, must be local in its efforts. It provides for its own neighbourhood, yet has no means of thoroughly ascertaining whether it accomplishes even that. It has no comprehensive care of the nation. It does not travel out of its own district to act where the local voluntaryism fails. If the inhabitants are poor, the gentry few or careless, the clergyman indifferent, or unsupplied with funds, or not born with a school genius, —nothing is done. Voluntaryism does the most among a rich population, and the least among a poor one. Dr. Vaughan declares that of the recent Educational contributions of the Independents, less than a tenth will go to assist the more destitute localities. It will mainly be spent in the wealthier districts, for whose wants the Voluntary Principle, that claims to take the whole country under its care, is still insufficient. What prospect then has it of a surplus power, and of a wide travelling eye, to aid the poorer districts and search out the wants of the remote, seeing that is now inadequate for the richer districts, where its activity is the greatest, and whose claims are pressing and at hand? The Morning Chronicle very recently gave an appalling statement of the deficiency of the means of popular instruction in Devonshire. Are the people of Devonshire to be abandoned to the Voluntaryism of Devonshire; and if that continues dead and sluggish, is Devon to remain for ever a blotch in the land? What is our boasted civilization, if the Body is to take no care for the Members! Does any one suppose that there is an incurable prejudice against reading and writing in Devonshire, or that any thing is wanting but a good local supply to foster a local demand? We agree with the writer in

the Companion to the Almanac, that though there was no deficiency in the aggregate supply, there would still be necessity for a comprehensive system, and a regulating power, to distribute it aright.

"There is a large deficiency of the means of education. It is a deficiency which cannot be rightly appreciated except under an organized system. The deficiency most probably exists in places where no enthusiasm can be got up in support of 'the legitimate authority of the Church,' or in resistance to what have been called 'its intended usurpations.' The deficiency for the most part exists in the capital, and in scattered agricultural districts. But wherever be the deficiency in the numerical amount of schools, it cannot be remedied without an organizing power. New Educational Returns might show that there was no aggregate numerical deficiency of accommodation for scholars; and yet there might be an absolute want of schools in particular localities."—P. 25.

The *quality* of the instruction is even a more serious matter than the impartiality of its distribution. Schools for the Children of the people are of three classes, charity Schools, private Schools, and dame Schools.

In the Charity Schools the monitorial system prevails. One man, ill paid, ill provided, and not unfrequently ill qualified, has the charge of a vastly greater number of children than any one man can teach or even manage; and his only assistants are *children* of ten or twelve years of age, themselves ill taught, ill disciplined, and with no aptitude or capacity for the arduous, delicate, and patient work of instructing very young children. It is enough to condemn the Voluntary Principle that it is identified with this poverty-stricken system. If our National and Lancasterian Schools, which yet receive Government aid in their erection, were required to provide one qualified Teacher for every fifty children, and to give him a remuneration that would retain him, the means could not be found, and the doors would have to be closed if the condition was enforced. As it is, one unhappy man struggles dimly with the ignorance and disorder of hundreds; and children with little gentleness, and much conceit, waste their own short period of Education, in a blundering and wrangling attempt to impart to other children what they do not know themselves. Children have very little interest in teaching

others. They have none of the qualities that fit for such a work. It is a robbery of their own brief and precious time. Its operation is very seldom favourable to their own characters. It is a monstrous absurdity, that children learn themselves by teaching others. A disciplined mind, or a conscientious one, will clear its own thoughts, and enlarge its information, under the responsibility of having to convey instruction to others; but a child with small training, and no conscience about the matter, will only make confusion worse confounded, turning its half knowledge, its floating, misty, notions into substantial error or nonsense, in the effort to define them. Omniscience would be the best Teacher even for a child. It is incredible folly to set children to teach children, except in that way which is natural to them,—of good fellowship with one another, interchange of talk, when their thoughts roll out like playthings.—The *moral* capacity is more wanting than the intellectual. Something of tender reverence, of awful love, should mark the affections of very young children towards their teachers. They should feel full upon them the mighty influence of a wise and clear mind, enforced by calmness, gentleness, and a steady purpose. The happiness of Childhood depends largely upon the successful enlisting of its veneration. It never works well until this highest sentiment is in steadfast operation, and often what is called, and treated, as naughtiness is nature's instinctive resentment, her indifference where no respect is due. A poor child subjected to a pert, petulant, consequential monitor, with not much more knowledge, and not so much good feeling as the child he snubs, is really a pitiable being. The Monitorial system, hatched in the feeblest infancy of Educational enterprize to stop the mouths of a squirearchy who would have made its *cost* fatal to a popular instruction which on its own account they dreaded, is the wretched substitution which national niggardliness, accompanied by views of the intelligence proper to the People at once low and insolent, has offered for a real Education, a true culture. That some modification of the Monitorial system might be usefully retained we do not mean to deny. Apprenticed teachers, whilst under higher instruction themselves, might both clear and fix their knowledge, and discipline their habits and their tempers, under the responsi-

bilities of tuition. But mere children who have no view to teaching as a profession should never be set to instruct other children, as a means to make the school work cheaply. We know that poverty may compel this, and that it may be better than nothing,—often indeed the best thing that is attainable, but it is not a state of things with which the Nation should rest satisfied. Nothing but a National system will ever drive out this miserable mechanism, this parroting of child to child, and introduce the clear, living, moral action of mind on younger mind, of wisdom, authority, and love. We trust the system is condemned already. Mr. Bellairs in his Report to the Council of Education (1844) says:

“The parents of the *teachers* complain, for they say their children lose a great portion of their time in teaching. The parents of the *taught* complain, for they say that the senior children are incompetent to fulfil properly the task assigned them, and that thereout *their little ones receive damage.*”

We know that many of our Charity Schools are admirably conducted; but he must be a bold man who will deny that in general they greatly want improvement, and that very often they totally fail to educate efficiently. And their failure mainly arises from causes which a comprehensive national system would be most effectual in removing;—from a want of qualified Schoolmasters, and a want of means to retain their services, if they were to be had. A good Schoolmaster makes a good School. But a good Schoolmaster must have a special training; and when he is trained, he must be paid up to that measure of remuneration which his talents and accomplishments would readily command elsewhere. Some devoted men may take to Education as their special mission, and every good teacher must have something of this spirit; but it will never do, as a practical scheme, to make the efficient instruction of the People depend on the general willingness of qualified teachers to undergo martyrdom. The martyr-spirit bloweth where it listeth, and is not to be calculated upon for daily work, as a matter of convenience, by those who are no martyrs. The average of Salaries in our Charity Schools is far below the wages of skilled labour. Many a workman in a factory working on raw material, clears double

the income of the man who works on intellect with intellect, on spirit with spirit. But all ill-paid labour, unless entirely *unpaid*, soon falls into contempt. The Educator becomes a drudge, and is treated as a drudge. Receiving small honour from others, he ceases to honour himself, or he takes refuge in that spirit of conceit, with which despised men, when not crushed, avenge themselves on the neglect and indifference of the world. It is essential to the efficiency of our Common Schools that their Masters be more honoured and better paid, and, so, less open to the temptations of some more profitable and respected service;—and we see no possible means by which this may be effected, except by the Nation giving the Educator a rank and station in society, a recognized place in the national *Clerisy*.\*

We might extract at almost any length, from the Reports of Inspectors and Visitors, evidence of the unsatisfactory character of our Charity Schools, National and Lancastrian. One Report for the Midland District (1845) calculates that “probably one half must leave the Schools, and be absorbed into the labouring community of the country not able to read.” Mr. Baptist Noel attests that

“The masters who seem generally respectable men are without assistants, and overwhelmed by the multitude of children whom they have to teach. The monitors, generally boys of ten or eleven years of age, who have only been two or three years in the school, and have little separate instruction, are almost as ignorant as the classes whom they instruct; scarcely know how to read well themselves, and are utterly incapable of exercising the intellect of the children on the lessons which they read. Instead of having a plentiful supply of books on all the subjects most likely to interest them, the elder Scholars are generally confined to the Bible for their common school exercise in reading, and are ill supplied even with Bibles. To masters so ill qualified, the School Committees afford but small salaries, and the low salaries hinder able men from entering on the profession of Schoolmaster, or starve them out of it, when they make it their choice.”

The Dame-Schools, and the private Schools for the Poor, are in a worse condition. Mr. Baines indeed does not

\* “It is one of the evils inseparable from a large portion of our daily Schools, connected with our particular places of worship, that being shut up to a particular place and sect, they can rarely afford to give a sufficient salary to their Schoolmaster or their Schoolmistress.”—*Dr. Vaughan*, p. 57.

shrink from their championship. Schools for the *poor*, however, being the matter in question, he says not one word about them, but dexterously glides off to the general character of private schools for the *rich*, and sums up in this grand style :—

“Clergymen, ministers of religion, graduates of the Universities, students in English or Scotch colleges, and young men whose proficiency at school led them to adopt the profession of teachers,—form the classes from which I believe our private schoolmasters to be chiefly supplied. Many of them are individuals of the highest character and worth, known advantageously as authors, and actuated, like the late Dr. Arnold and the late Dr. Tate, by a lofty ambition to train youth for eminence and usefulness. To set down our private schools generally as taught by inefficient or mercenary persons, is, I am persuaded, a calumny.”

But what has this to do with the matter in hand—the private Schoolmasters of the children of the poor? Mr. Baines cannot mean to say all this of *them*. Of the Dame-Schools he gives only the favourable side, and no doubt there is a favourable side. We shall cite against him only one witness, Mr. Baptist Noel, a most competent and trustworthy person sent on a special mission of inspection. Of the Dame-Schools he says :

“The instruction received in dame-schools is represented by the statistical reports to be of the most unsatisfactory kind in each of the five towns (Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Bury, Salford).—From the answers uniformly made to my inquiries on this subject among persons acquainted with the poor, I judge that the great majority, both of dame and of common schools, in the Lancashire towns, answer to these descriptions; and the very few which my time enabled me to visit did not contradict that conclusion.”

He then gives a graphic description of a dame-school, and of a private school taught by a master, and closes thus :—

“Nearly the whole, therefore, of the number attending these schools must be subtracted from the numbers supposed to be receiving sound instruction.”

We do not understand how any one can read the various Reports contained in the Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, and yet keep himself in the



belief that the Common Schools of the country are *not* in a condition of inefficiency that is disgraceful to the Nation.

Voluntaryism has no power of distributing to the best advantage even the insufficient forces it can raise; it works upon its own limb, and has no care for the body politic; it cannot find masters qualified for their work; it cannot keep them if it could find them, for it cannot make their station respectable, nor pay them the wages of clever artizans; it gives little approaching to true culture, and often not even the ability to read to those who numerically swell the glory of its deeds; it exists in isolation, and has no support from combination, no encouragement in the high feeling, that beneath its comprehensive agency a nation's noblest wants, in its obscurest corners, are being seen and overtaken,—a nation's regeneration advancing, not in parts and patches, but with a steady and universal movement.

5. But what can the Nation do to organize, regulate and distribute the forces of Education?

In the first place, we would have the Nation do what is necessary for the *unsupplied* wants of the Country, without any direct interference, even in the way of unasked advice, with the existing supply. The devoted men, and the zealous Institutions, who were the first labourers in this field, must have their work respected. It cannot be the policy of the country to depreciate or enfeeble any existing agency. It must work in harmony with the genius of the English people; not disturbing those plans of beneficence which are native to its unforced activity,—but supplementing them wherever they fall short with kindred, though more perfect, institutions conceived in their own spirit.

If education was a domestic, a family interest, cared for by every father and mother, as much as daily food and clothing,—that would be the happiest condition for the country. The next best state would be that the highest culture of a neighbourhood should charge itself with the care of the lowest,—that local zeal should provide for local wants,—that the district wealth should help the district poverty,—the district employer look after its employed,—the district Christianity invade the district heathenism.



It is not merely that the State ought to avoid the burden of large pecuniary responsibilities now voluntarily supplied,—but that it should fear to injure the highest of all educations, that which is carried on between man and man through the natural operations of sympathy, wisdom and love, in the proper sphere of their action, within the compass of their special obligations; that it should deprive no man of his duties who is *willing* to discharge them,—that it should beware how it weakens not merely that moral energy which is called forth by use, but that sense of Duty, the element of the virtues, which declines whenever responsibilities are withdrawn; that it should regard a Government—not as the well-spring of a nation's good, but as the comprehensive and regulating Power that corrects its evils. Not to discharge the Duties of the people, but 'to see to it that the Republic come to no harm,' is the province of a Government. It is that portion of good which no one else is doing, the prevention of that ~~evil~~ <sup>evil</sup> which no one else will correct,—for which individual, local, territorial agencies have shown themselves to be utterly, hopelessly insufficient,—which the State, the aggregate and supervisory power, must take for its own work. If it is not good for this, for what is it good? Why does the State work the Post Office? Why does it not leave individuals to convey their own letters? It ought to do so, if individual or municipal agencies were equal to the duties. And precisely on the same principle, whatever work essential to the nation's well-being no one else can do, or, what is the same thing, long experience has shown that no one else *will* do, the State, that is the *whole* Community, must regard as its own. Ought that whole Community any longer to peril the national character, by waiting for further experience respecting the chances of culture for its lowest classes? Fortunately we may hope that Governments will occasionally be free from this kind of expectation, seeing that it is not to *them* the keen satirist attributes this peculiar wisdom. *Rusticus* expectat, &c.

Secondly. The central and regulating Power should acquaint itself, by a scrutiny which individuals cannot make, with the educational wants of remote districts, remote from the prosperous towns where alone voluntarism can be trusted, remote in those very towns from the common

walks of prosperous men, concealed in the hidden depths where poverty retires back and debasement hides, or scattered far and wide over the 'tartar outskirts' of civilization where the Voluntary Principle rears no Chapels; and having found out the neglected localities where every court pours out swarms of children on the narrow streets, children whose parents leave them to the liberty of nature, if nature it is to leave the animal to wallow for itself and the spiritual part to perish,—it should there plant a good School, handsome, cheerful, well aired, well warmed, well lighted, amply provided with all the means of engaging the attention and quickening the minds of young children, to be the commencement of a new life, the radiating centre of order, intelligence and decency to the whole neighbourhood. Where no Churchman, no Dissenter, no private Missionary of knowledge has yet come, there let the State, without rivalry, commence its work. Mr. Baines acknowledges that there are such places, but says that they must be left to the Voluntary Principle. That is strange, seeing that they *have* been left to the Voluntary Principle, and that the Voluntary Principle has left them to themselves. He even thinks that such places would remain very much as they are, under the best possible provision for education. That is stranger still; an infidel despair of human nature, an argument to excuse the very apathy, the do-nothing system, which has borne such hideous fruits, against which we would solemnly protest. Is the very badness of the case to be made a pretext for the Nation's inactivity? Is the horrid state of things which has grown up under Voluntaryism, to be given as a reason why Voluntaryism must reign alone? Mr. Baines gives a powerful description of these places; its power is in its truth.

"In all communities, and especially in large cities and towns, there are sinks of iniquity, into which all the sores and all the filth of society naturally run, and empty themselves,—where squalid poverty, heathenish ignorance, and brutal sensuality are found in dreadful combination. Here vice runs for indulgence,—crime for shelter,—vagrancy for a halting place,—and shame, ruin, and misfortune to hide their heads. Sometimes these places are found in contiguity with wealth, rapid improvement, and even with the highest religious advantages. I have seen a little—a very little—

of such places. I have sometimes (though too seldom) ventured with tracts from house to house, and from chamber to chamber, talking to the wretched inmates. The impression generally left on my mind was, that the poor creatures seemed to live in a world of their own, where their minds were as much cooped in as their bodies, and where they naturally grovelled and weltered, never venturing to lift their heads so far as to look on society above them, or to be conscious that there were such things as comfort, cleanliness, reputation, knowledge, or religion in the world.

— 'So thick bestrown,  
Abject and lost, lay these.'

"I have felt that if there were a church, a chapel, and a school, at the entrance of every alley, the forlorn and sunk inhabitants would never look at any of them,—perhaps hardly know of their existence."—P. 23.

This is to make anything prove anything. A good state of the district would prove Voluntaryism to be enough; a bad state proves anything and everything to be useless. The success of Voluntaryism, and its hideous failure, are alike conclusive that there is nothing like leather. Surely a description so dreadful is not the best of arguments that the system under which things have run to such corruption, is so safe and sufficient that it ought not even to be aided. That all these horrors exist where there is no School, is surely an odd way of proving that a School ought not to be tried. We should have thought that the acknowledged failure of Voluntaryism was at least a *primâ facie* reason for trying another agency. And we must add that the obligation of the trial of any new means that may assuage so dire an Evil, falls upon the Nation itself, because by *denying the Country a comprehensive Church*, by establishing a Dogma and a Discipline, it has provoked the Sectarianism of England; it has rendered a parochial administration of Christianity an impossibility; it has taken away the power of assigning a manageable locality to a responsible agency; it has forced into existence the very conditions from which alone could issue such results, as whole regions of outcasts over which no Church, no Chapel, nor School proceeding from them, no Pastor, nor moral instrument of any kind, has special supervision, or is charged with any care. Our Sectarianism, the blotch on our Christianity, perpetuated by our Establishment, has rendered it an im-

possibility for the Nation to say to any set of Agents, "Here is a district not too large for faithful labour to behold the fruits of its work, and we consign it to your diligence." What a comprehensive Christianity would have effected, if a National Church existed, the Nation which has refused us such a Church, must now supply by special instruments.

Thirdly. The establishment of Schools in all those localities which Voluntaryism leaves destitute, necessarily requires that the Nation should take measures for providing a supply of competent Teachers. Normal and Model Schools must furnish well-trained Masters, practised in the latest improvements in the Art of education, and raised to the spirit of the high work to which they are called,—in sufficient numbers not only for the new Schools, but for all, from whatever source proceeding, that would gladly be relieved from their present difficulty of obtaining accomplished instructors. The only influence that the Government Schools exert upon the Voluntary ones, should be by presenting them with models, and furnishing them, if they choose to accept them, with men capable of organising and working similar schools, wherever they may be placed. A few standard institutions would speedily raise the character of all the schools in the same district. We should strongly recommend that such Training and Model Schools be not confined to London and its neighbourhood. It would give local strength to National Education, if every large Town in the Kingdom possessed its Normal Institution, holding something of the relation of a University, at least of a parent Institution, to the Schools of the whole District. Here the young teacher, first put in charge of a School, might return for counsel and assistance when any perplexity crossed his inexperience; here he would find sympathy and direction; and here he would be relieved from that isolation, that dreary sense of loneliness, of working without encouragement from those who employ and pay, but have no conception of the difficulties of his course, of the peculiar trials of his life,—which often proves more oppressive to young teachers than the toil of their daily work. Here, in its Model School, would be a standard, to be seen in operation, which all teachers and committees might visit, inspect, and imitate. Here the Appren-

tice Teachers would be taught and exercised. They might be sent out in succession to act as assistants in the various Schools of the town, to the happy extinction of the Monitorial System, and return in the evening to receive instruction themselves. Here many of the Masters of the Day Schools might themselves reside, and be employed some part of the evening, or early morning, hours in the Education of the apprentices. Here we might have, together, a nursery for good Teachers, a model of a good School, and an Association of professional instructors, sustaining, animating, and enlightening one another.—It would be essential, however, to the usefulness of Normal Establishments, that National Schools should not be restricted in their choice of Masters to the supply which they furnish. Nothing should be regarded in the selection but *qualification*, however, wherever, attained; and every inducement should be used to attract men of a higher and more general education into this service, as one honoured by the country. Indeed we doubt, if the office of instructor in a National School was properly respected and remunerated, whether these Normal Establishments would long be wanted, except to provide the Assistant, or pupil Teachers, who might look forward to become Masters, in the course of promotion. Men whose education cost the State nothing, men of high attainments and of a devoted and unworldly nature, would often be candidates for such situations as the noblest that Society has to confer, if Society did not degrade them as it now does, by the low standard of qualification it applies, and the small measure of honour it bestows. The Canton of Geneva with no Normal Schools, always attracts the most accomplished Masters, because it pays them best, and respects them most.\* Our Colleges and Universities would supply the Teachers of our National Schools, if the office brought something of a curate's dignity;—less than a curate's pay it could not well bring. But it would be requisite that in all Schools erected and supported by the Nation, the Nation should be certified of the sufficiency of the instruction. The National Schoolmasters must so far become a profession; they must have a Diploma, a Certificate of character and competency from an authorised

\* See the admirable Article in the October Number of the Quarterly Review, p. 423.

Board of Examiners. Admission to this test should be open to all who applied ; and the Diploma granted, without expense, the moment the requisite attainments were ascertained, and such testimonials of Character presented as ought to satisfy judicious men reasonably cautious. The capacity for imparting instruction might be put to the test by requiring the Candidate to exercise a Class in the presence of the Examiners, in some department to be named at the time without previous communication with the Candidate. The Board of Examiners ought not to consist of *School Masters* ; a fatal mistake, as we regard it, in the constitution of the College of Preceptors recently attempted. Surgeons examine Surgeons, because none else have the requisite knowledge,—but no such necessity exists in the case of School Masters. We doubt whether even School Inspectors ought not to be excluded from the Board of Examiners,—though their experience might in some respects confer a peculiar fitness.—The certificates of such a Board would be valuable aids to the Directors and Patrons of all our Common Schools, when called to the difficult duty of selecting a Teacher—though they must not be limited in their choice to those possessed of such Diplomas—nor must any such restriction be applied to our Voluntary Schools, unless indeed the principle should be extended to *all* Schools high or low, to all Teachers of whatever rank,—which we should regard as a measure of the highest wisdom.

Fourthly. Frequent *Inspection* by highly-qualified persons is essential to stimulate the daily activity, and ensure the steady progress, of all our Common Schools. Masters go to sleep if there is no competent witness to their efforts—nothing to excite ambition, and keep them up to the mark. It must be a very noble mind that does not grow torpid when no superior eye ever looks upon its labours, or metes its work. School Committees have very seldom the experience, the qualifications, or the leisure for this kind of service ; and very often their ignorance of the true state of the School, and their inability to test it, keeps them on the constant fret, leads them to adopt a tone of dissatisfaction, one dull monotony of complaining doubt, as a sagacious precaution,—making them sometimes mischievously meddling, and sometimes oppressively discouraging, a night-



mare on the teacher's soul. A School Master liable to periodical, and competent, inspection would have not only a motive for exertion, but a release from care, a confidence that a just judgment would be passed upon his work, which would also assign him his proper place in the estimation of his employers.—School Inspectors, too, would through their Reports be constantly bringing before the Teachers the standard to be aimed at; it would be their especial duty to make themselves familiar with every new improvement in the science and method of education; to be able, if required, to illustrate it in practice, to show it in operation; and their Reports would enable all disposed to benefit by them, both to raise the character of the instruction, and to amend the discipline and methods of the Schools. But let the advocates of National Education be cautious. An Inspector may be their evil genius. There is a jealousy of the whole race, not without some cause, and the wisest care must be taken to disarm and lay it. They must have no authority except to examine, and report, on Schools supported by the Nation. They must have no power, in the School itself, of suggesting an alteration, of rebuking master or scholar, of *uttering* a dissatisfaction. The whole expression of their judgments and opinions must be confined to their *Reports*. If indeed they are invited to free oral communication, great benefit may result, but, even so, they must be restricted to suggestion and counsel, and have no power of ordering or of altering anything. Neither should it be within their province to fix the character and range of the instruction to be imparted in these Schools. This should be the business of a higher Department, of the Minister of Instruction, or the Committee of Council on Education aided by proper assistants. The sole duty of Inspectors should be to ascertain and report whether in schools for whose character and conduct the Nation was responsible, the instruction reached, at least, that lowest standard of excellence which the National Board deemed requisite. But though an Inspector should have no authority to enter a private or Voluntary School, the advantages of Inspection should be extended to these at the request of their patrons or managers. The Inspector should include all such in his Report, testing them by the standard applied to the National Schools. If they



surpassed that standard in some cases, they would keep alive a wholesome rivalry and prevent that tendency to stagnate which is ascribed to official ambition; if they fell below that standard, all the stimulants to improvement would be brought into action upon themselves. In this way we may hope that Inspectors themselves would occasionally receive a useful lesson, from the superior excellence of Schools over which the Nation had no direct control. Inspection is essential, and by being rigorously restricted to Reports, invested with power neither to fix nor alter the National Standard, but simply to ascertain how far it was reached, Inspectors might be freed from that officiousness, self-consequence, and encroachment of authority which, we verily believe, with a portion of manufacturers and nonconformists, in the shape of an intense antipathy to the Inspector *genus*, make the head and front of their objection to a National Education.

Fifthly. We are not called upon to furnish the working details of a comprehensive Scheme, but simply to show what is desirable, and not practically impossible. It is evident that local management, local responsibility, are of the first importance, even to Schools whose support may come, partly or entirely, from national resources. Wherever this local superintendence is attainable, it ought to be secured. To what local agency the School administration could safely be attached, so as to make each District morally chargeable with its own Schools, though subject to the periodic scrutiny of Commissioners on the extent and sufficiency of Education within its bounds, is one of the most difficult points in the practical details. Dr. Hook's notion of employing the County Magistrates for this purpose is about as absurd a one as could have been suggested; almost all of them being, more or less, partizans in religion and politics, and very few of them having any special qualification for the work. In the anomalous condition of the country as to the infinite variety of its local administration, lies the chief difficulty. The agency that would work admirably in one place does not exist in another. In all Corporate places, provision for the Education of the people might be made part of the Duty of the municipal Government. The Wards of the Town should be the School Districts of the Borough. The Members of Council, with

the proper assistants, should be required to furnish minute Reports of the state of Education among their Constituents, exact statistics of the numbers of Children in the Ward, of the School attendance, and the School sufficiency. The Town should be empowered, and required, to supply the deficiency. It should be restrained by Law from introducing anything into the constitution or management of the Schools, that could debar from their use any class in the Community. With this exception, it should be free to conduct the Schools according to its own wisdom, provided they are supported exclusively by local funds. The Government should take care to provide the country with a good Model, but by no means should force it upon those districts, or parts of districts, that may be found willing to supply what is wanting, out of their own readiness, and with their own means.—How the School funds are to be supplied, is another question of extreme delicacy. That Method is the best which will interfere the least with the Voluntary supply. On this account annual Grants from Parliament might be preferable to a school tax. A school tax might stop some voluntary contributions; public Grants have no such direct tendency to suggest to a subscriber when solicited for his subscription, that he is taxed already. But, at the same time, there is infinite trouble, and not a little heart-burning, and meanness, in what is at present ridiculously termed the Voluntary system of supply. Every one who has had to conduct it, knows how little voluntary it is. Hardly any one makes a voluntary offer, a spontaneous gift. The screw has to be applied, and the screw driver is as unpopular as the tax gatherer. He has as much of odium, and is less indifferent to it. Voluntary support is in almost every case extorted support, extorted by solicitation, dunning, personal influence, appeals to shame and duty. And the burden of application that has to be yearly repeated, and of large personal sacrifice besides, falls often upon a few. Most of the Contributors to a school never see it, know nothing about it, have no interest in it beyond that of good wishes, have no personal concern with it but to give their guinea when the collector is fortunate enough to catch hold of them. There could not be less of moral connection or individual interest, if the collector was a tax gatherer. This leads to a parsimonious expendi-

ture throughout—every new item is a terror to the treasurer. Books, salaries, apparatus, comfortable repairs, every thing, is economised to the lowest point; and every thing becomes unattractive, dirty, dreary, and uninviting. It would not be *all* evil, even if a national system were finally to displace a *reluctant* voluntaryism. Our great School Societies and the Committee of Council on Education know but little of the yearly difficulties of *sustaining* a school: the erection of the Building is the only matter with which they deal. All voluntary schools that admit National inspection, and found deficient in the proper means, books, and appurtenances of Education, should be open to offers of Government support, to supply what is absolutely necessary to their efficiency. At the same time, if the National System is ever to absorb the Voluntary, it must be in a voluntary way: there must be no thought of even offering assistance, wherever the other means of Education are not so defective as to destroy its usefulness.—In country places, and towns not corporate, the National system would have to connect itself with some other local agency, the most suitable that offered, with the view of averting the evils of centralization, and of engaging departmental superintendence and support. This would necessarily vary with the variety of local administration, unless the Nation saw fit to create a special machinery for the purpose, and to make it everywhere co-extensive with the bounds of townships or of parishes. Such a Board would have power to act only in regard to Schools originated or supported by the Government, and these must by Law be so constituted and ordered as to leave unaffected the rights and liberties of every class of the people. Periodical scrutiny to ascertain the want; a central power to supply it; and a local agency to promote local co-operation,—these seem the main requisites.

But in National Schools, supported partly by local zeal, it is essential that no rigid uniformity of system be attempted. To the local supporters of the School the government of it should be assigned; they should be free to introduce new methods and new books; to enlarge the range of instruction; to adopt a higher standard, an improved apparatus, a different discipline; nor should anything be required, as the result of *Inspection*, except that

the School do not fall below a certain *minimum* of excellence; a *maximum* it should not attempt to fix. In its Model Schools, and all others supported exclusively by the Nation, the Government would have an opportunity of exhibiting its own system, of introducing its own books, of rearing its own apparatus, of carrying forwards its own discipline, and of presenting the result to the examination and the imitation of the Country. The power of good example, the furnishing of good instruments, is the only invasion it should design upon the Voluntary System.

6. Two difficulties have been started; one of them requiring some delicacy of treatment,—the other a chimera. It is said that a National System cannot be made to include the national sectarianism; and, the contradiction being disregarded, that it will inevitably ruin the national independence.

*Denominational* Schools, Church Schools for Anglican children, Baptist Schools for Antipædobaptist children, Roman Catholic Schools for Papistical children, Independent Schools for Congregational children, Unitarian Schools for Anti-Trinitarian children, are said to be the only possible contrivances for satisfying the claim, or the conscience, of each sect, in the religious education of the people. But can it be that, mixed up as leaven with all those abstruser points on which masculine intellects may differ, there is no common milk of the word fit for babes? Can it be that infants and children are competent judges of controversial theology; and if they are not competent, can it be that it is contemplated, in their very tenderest years, to cut out the faculty of judgment, and to pre-occupy them for ever with the conclusions or prejudices to which other minds are pledged? Can it be that the value not only of individual conviction, but of the very power of ever reaching a conviction, has come to be so regarded by the people of England,—and that the heirs of the Reformers have made up their minds to destroy *faith*, to abstract from it all the energy of personal belief, provided only they can secure their own traditions being received?—Is it possible that there is no Christianity, no love of God, no knowledge of duty, no beauty, loveliness and power in Christ, apart from those mysteries, in regard to which the loftiest wisdom and the profoundest knowledge are found ranged upon

different sides? Can it be that what St. Paul calls the carnal divisions, the party interests, of Churches and Chapels, are to exact the sacrifice of children, and to be maintained by the immolation of their mental rights, by the forfeiture for ever of the freedom of their mature judgment whilst yet they are in pupillage, too ignorant to know the mutilation they are undergoing, and too feeble to resist? Can it really be that every Church and Chapel looks upon the children "of the congregation" as its own by right of birth,—and any change that might result from an unfettered mind at years of discretion, as the desertion of the colours under which they were born?—Can any thing be more sad to one who loves Christianity than the melancholy fact, that *in its name* has the Education of the people of England hitherto been resisted, refused, and made impossible? Imagine our Lord himself giving religious instruction to children. Do not the subjects that instantly occur to us as those on which he would speak, the affections he would touch, show us at once how plain the way is, if we look at it with a Christian, and not with a sectarian, eye? The whole difficulty arises out of the notion that final opinions on dogmatic theology ought to be instilled into the minds of children who as yet have no faculty of judging for themselves, who are made Roman Catholics, or Anglicans, or Nonconformists with an equal pliability, and who under the same training and authority would become Buddhists without any resistance. Get rid of that monstrous usurpation, in a country that is perpetually canting about the liberty of private judgment whilst it commences its efforts with the very infant to render private judgment a sheer impossibility, and the whole of the difficulty that attaches to National Education, on the ground of Religion, vanishes away. Our first answer then is, that the difficulty itself grows out of the grossest usurpation, out of a violence upon individual judgment, practised on the persons of children who know not the value of that which is then cut out of their nature for ever,—a violence not to be reconciled with any true idea of the power and character of *faith*.—A religious teacher thinks it a righteous thing, to crush in the bud the natural freedom of opinion, the natural force of evidence; and by an act of arbitrary will to incapacitate a mind, for ever, for attaining an unbiassed, individual, view of the great and difficult subjects

that divide the learning and wisdom of the Christian world. And if this power is denied him, he then thinks it a righteous thing *to withhold all education whatever*, to consign a being with fierce passions and appetites, undisciplined, unenlightened, to the dark chances of the world. He says in effect, 'Unless I have absolute power over your religious *opinions*, you shall have from me no protection against *Ignorance and Sin*,—for anything that I shall do to prevent it, your whole spiritual, moral, and intellectual nature may run riot with evil.' And thus while the physicians are contending who shall have the case, and carry off the glory and the gain, the patient is perishing beyond recovery, sinking into spiritual death. Yet all that the poor patient requires is substantial food, good nourishment and plenty of it, plain meat and drink, on the efficacy of which to preserve men from dying all people have arrived at an agreement,—whilst the nice points, for the sake of which the spiritual doctors are keeping these common prescriptions in abeyance, affect such mystic matters as homœopathy, hydropathy, mesmeric practice, and all the other departures from the ancient allopathy. What frightful pedantry,—to stop all elementary education, all moral training, all the religion of pious feeling and *knowledge*,—for surely the field of religious knowledge is wide, quite apart from doubtful *opinion*,—until the Schoolmaster's creed is agreed upon! And what a monstrous pretence on which to do such things,—that you have an absolute right over the child's, the *man's*, opinions! It is impossible that a greater wrong could be perpetrated. It is impossible that the idea of Justice, of mental Rights, could be more grossly violated. We take a passive mind, the mind of an infant, of a child, perfectly helpless in our hands, and we write on it our own prejudices—we make it a copy of our theological selves,—ourselves being but copies of somebody else, the parrots of controversial pupillage. We know that these are matters deep and high; that it is absolutely not *honest* to have any opinion about them except upon a full weighing of the evidence, with some maturity and competence of judgment: yet we do not pretend that the tender minds we have usurped come to our conclusions by such a process, or of their own accord:—we are ready to avow that it is a bare act of our own strong will. We have not given them the



requisite furniture of facts and information, and waited for some ripeness of judgment—but *we have provided against* that time when otherwise they might have been able to think freely, that they shall think in no other way than as we please. We are satisfied that an instructed conscience would as soon plunder a child of its birthright, preclude by advice forced on infancy manhood's power over lands and money, as in this way strip it of the better rights of its soul, withdraw for ever the wide domains of Truth from its free gaze.—But this usurping system in religious education is only a fragment, and a specimen, of a very general want of faith in principles, of a very general want of trust in Truth. Men do evil in the hope that good may come of it; they have no confidence in their own conclusions; they dare not confide in the free workings of a right principle, and they endeavour, by foreign means, to influence the result. They dare not open up minds, trusting them to find the light for themselves. They are afraid that the Truth will not win its own way, unless they help it by unfair advantages. This is the teaching that makes indifferentists, sceptics, or bigots, crushing all individual and rational faith. When will men learn to act truthfully, in bold and godly simplicity, even when they mean to do good? This is the great want of the age,—to be ashamed of manœuvring, even for Righteousness' sake. This, a distrust of Truth, of its fair and natural power, is about the worst form of Infidelity.

But in what sense should Religion be the foundation of all Education?—for surely there must be some sense in which this principle may be maintained without encroaching upon the spiritual birthright of men. In the hands of bigots, it is a formidable premise,—‘Religion must be the basis of all education,’—for since to *them* there is no religion outside of their own creeds, the inference is clear, that it is their duty to pre-occupy the unresisting mind of childhood with their own dogmas. It is the religious *sentiment* and *principle*, that ought to lie at the foundation, or indeed rather at the top, the culminating point, of all education. Piety, the sense of God, should proceed from, and be strengthened by, all knowledge. But it is morally, devotionally, and not at all dogmatically, that this holds true in childhood. It is true of the religion of Conscience and of Christian feeling. It is not true of the religion of



creeds. Results of opinion should in fact never be taught at any stage of Education. Let competent knowledge be given, and an unbiassed mind enter upon judgment. The whole world of undisputed Truth would still be open to the religious instructor; the whole of that vast field of knowledge, duties, sentiments, so readily distinguishable from all that is doubtful in opinion. There the teacher and the child might righteously meet. There is the whole of natural religion. There is the whole of the Religion of man's spirit, conscience, and affections. There is the whole of Scriptural history, rich in all human examples and warnings. There is the whole of the life of Christ, for to that as a medium of religious instruction, as a model of spiritual perfection, not even an unbeliever would object.—There is, then, no difficulty in teaching Christianity to the Children of all Denominations in mixed classes, except upon a principle that anticipates all individual judgment, and renders the doctrine of the man but the tradition of the child.

But even if this preposterous principle is adopted, and babes are to be pre-occupied by the doctrines of the congregation within which they happen to be born,—there is no difficulty whatever in giving effect to such a system, without interference with general and combined instruction in all the other departments of knowledge which would form part of a National Education. Why should not writing, reading, and arithmetic, good manners, and good morals, commence at once to be taught in common, even though religion must be taught apart? The system of National Education for Ireland has abundantly shown that there is no difficulty in the way, except to those who desire to make a difficulty, the intensity of their bigotry not permitting them so much as to tolerate even the presence of those who pursue a method different from their own. There are many plans on which such a system might be worked. We will sketch one; not as the best, but sufficient to show how practicable the matter is, supposing the difficulty not to be a false pretence.—Let the direct religious instruction of the School be given at certain fixed times. Let the Master be a religious instructor, —only let it be his province to teach what the Quarterly Review call *religiousness*, as distinguished from the inculcation of dogmatic theology. Let him mix up with the

matter of his common instruction whatever illustrations of the goodness and wisdom of God, whatever lessons of piety and practical morals may naturally be suggested to an earnest and good man, with a heart full of thoughtful love. But let him be jealous of the impartial character of a *National* Instructor, satisfied with the spirit of Christianity, and not abuse his trust by narrowing himself to one section of his school, in becoming the advocate of doubtful opinions. Let him also be regarded as the ordinary religious Teacher for the hours set apart for direct religious instruction, in case the Ministers of Religion should not attend to take their respective classes. At such times let his instructions be confined to Scriptural History; to the wide extent of religious *facts* and knowledge; and to all the interests of personal religion, as connected with a spirit of devotion,—with daily prayer,—with trust in God and those views of His providence which confer a spiritual dignity on the humblest lot worthily sustained,—with inward purity, patience and self-denial,—with gentleness, meekness, forbearance, and forgiveness of injuries,—with an honest heart, a clear conscience, a spirit of honourable self-dependence, and an upright life,—with family affections and brotherly love,—with the example and imitation of Jesus Christ, as our divinely-revealed pattern of a child of God.—At the same time let the album be also a register of the religious denomination of each Child; let the School put itself in communication with the Ministers of Religion in its own District, or, if need be, in the town or place; let them be informed of the times devoted to direct religious instructions; let their attendance be invited and expected, and whenever they appear let the children of their denominations, respectively, fall into their own special classes, and be handed over to their exclusive teaching for the appointed time. Let this be a matter so clearly arranged and understood, that it shall be the fault of the Ministers themselves, if they do not attend at the appointed hours to keep in their own hands the special religious instruction of their own classes.—On this plan we do not see that it would be necessary to provide separate apartments for religious instruction. When a number of classes are all earnestly engaged there is no sensible interruption, and under the general, and not unpleasing, hum of a common intentness and interest, the

seclusion of each is most effectually secured. But this is a matter of arrangement to which the *National* wisdom may safely be deemed adequate,—if only the principle is admitted, and the object, a National Education, desired.

It is difficult to know how to meet an idea so chimerical as that the Independence of the people of England, the spontaneity, energy, and enterprise of the national character would give way under a system of National Education. There is such a complete absence of all apparent relation of cause and effect, that one does not know where to find a likely side on which to attack the fallacy. A Poor Law might foster the idleness and dependence of a people; that is, it might encourage a desire for meat and drink at the nation's expense. But a Nation that *does* make provision for a class of wants that are sure to crave their own supply, for hunger and thirst and cold and nakedness, cannot, with consistency, advance its fear of weakening the natural energies of the people, as a reason for withholding all provision for a class of wants *that do not assert themselves*; a class of wants that, unlike those of the animal, are apt to slumber altogether unless they are stimulated into vitality by spiritual action from without,—and that never can be in *excess*, for Knowledge is the stability of a people, and carries with it the correction of whatever is evil in their state. But it is a strange mockery for any man who knows how popular education *is* provided, to talk of a National system as threatening the independence of the national character. Is it not at present a matter of charity? Is it not at present provided *for* the people, and largely by the bounty of individuals? Have not many of our educational institutions the unmistakable signs of an eleemosynary character upon them? Is it not less enervating for a people to regard themselves as members of the State, than as pensioners, as they now are, upon individual charity? The Education of the people is *not now* provided by the people. Is it not better for the national virtues that the Nation should supply the highest wants of the people, than that they should continue to be provided for by alms, the most degrading, capricious, and inadequate source of supply? Continental systems haunt the imagination of some of our reasoners. In a despotism every thing must be centralized, and because education happens not to be an exception to so general a rule, advantage is

taken of this fact, by sophists or blunderers, to produce the impression that National Education necessarily *leads* to despotism. It is a very obvious reply, that in despotic countries centralization is universal; and that in *free* countries *Education* is just the 'one thing needed' to enable a people to value their privileges, and to use them wisely. Why should these great blessings be separated, Education and Civil Freedom? Why should not popular Intelligence, and popular Liberty, be found together? Add Instruction to a people already civilly and politically free, and is there any danger that *Knowledge* will render them indifferent to their highest rights, and an easy prey to Power? We do not remember ever meeting a more cool piece of assumption than is contained in the following sentence of Mr. Baines:

"That will be a bad day for England, and not a good one for you, when a Russell is found on one side, and the friends of Civil and Religious Liberty on the other."—P. 131.

Perhaps indeed the same Letters may furnish a parallel, in the passage where the writer contends that Schoolmasters cannot be restricted from inculcating dogmatic Theology without the danger that they will all turn infidels, and then quietly slips into this style of remark,—so as to leave an awful impression of the noxious influence of National Schoolmasters, as they are likely to be, both on their pupils, and on the general public.

"But it is also to be remembered that Schoolmasters, being an educated class, must necessarily have great influence out of their Schools. Many of them are authors, and some lecturers. *The evil would, therefore, be of wide range.*"—P. 72.

But, to return to the fallacy and the fear, must not Education confirm Liberty where it already is, instead of endangering its stability? To what can we ascribe the New Reformation in Germany, if not to popular Education in operation for a quarter of a century? No doubt a million and a half of pilgrims to Treves is a great deduction from any encouraging view, but whilst these were from the very poorest of the population, and not belonging to Germany alone but flowing from the border countries, the sudden rise of a Free Church in a Nation so utterly destitute of all individual action in public matters, is a circumstance that can be attributed only to a powerful ex-

pansion of popular intelligence, to a new sentiment of personal responsibility in the highest relations, which must work out other consequences that will affect the general progress of Mankind. Yet the education of Prussia is only a School Education, and the true Education of a people is rendered impossible by civil inactivity,—that true Education which consists in applying to real life, in the circumstances of a free society, the thoughts and principles which are the fruits of experience,—which consists in thinking, judging, and acting for ourselves,—in the exercise of mind upon our own affairs, and in the discharge of the solemn duties which our investiture with social trusts and privileges compels. A people not civilly free cannot thoroughly be educated: and a people without Education know not how to use their civil freedom. Abroad there is intellectual Education with no sphere for it to act in: *here*, at home, there is practical liberty for the very lowest class, and all the emergencies of urgent existence, but not the Intelligence, the cultivated faculty, that ought to be applied to its great occasions. There, there is Knowledge without Liberty: and here, too often, Liberty without Knowledge. And if *there* a new reformation starts up among the most restricted religionists out of *ideas* alone, what progress and emancipation might be looked for *here*, if the personal freedom, and practical habits of our people were softened, guided, and enlightened by the refinement and culture of a thorough Education? In a country where religious, political, and civil Liberty is not only practically secure, but even sensitive and jealous, a National Education, by adding light to power, guiding the free hand to the right end, could work only an unmixed good.

In the absence of nationality in our Church, it is a pleasing idea that a bond of union, something common to us as a people, might be found in the Nationality of our Schools. It is the great glory of Christianity that it lays the foundation of a Universal Church, by impressing the same divine image on the hearts of all mankind. Were it not for jarring creeds and metaphysical salvations, that one image of the divine in man would unite the world in a spiritual brotherhood. But Christianity at present is valued chiefly not for its essential spirit, the aspiration after oneness with God as shown in Christ, but for exclusive peculiarities which separate into jealous and hostile parties

those who profess to be animated by one and the same desire. At present our very Schools are but the nurseries of Chapels. Each Sect educates its own recruits. A National Education would break down these party walls. Children would cease to be theologically distributed, at least in their general education. It would be something for all sects to have met in childhood, and to be embraced within the fraternal bond of a common experience in early years, a common enlightenment, and a common discipline. Whilst that independence and variety of character, which is observable now even in the children of the same family, would remain uninjured—that natural diversity which no school teaching ever yet affected—there would be a new sentiment of Unity among our people, and a nearer approach to an uniform condition of civilization. A high standard of Education applied to the whole country would tend to remove those shameful inequalities in intelligence and morality, which are now the result of district neglect, whilst yet individuality and freedom would suffer no restriction.—We see no other means by which our Sectarianism may be subdued; or our vallies exalted, our rough places made smooth, and our crooked, straight.

We need not enter upon the subject of the *compulsoriness* of Education. It cannot be enforced in this country, but it might be so *encouraged*, as after a time practically to secure the same end. It is only in the spirit of the giver of the feast in the sacred parable, that Education can 'compel' the people to come in. It cannot drive, but it may lead them in. The Nation has a vast power to encourage education. It might require a certain *minimum* of instruction in all departments of the public service, down to the very lowest offices. Wherever the State is asked to place the seal of its authority on an agreement between contracting parties, it might fairly require some moderate amount of intelligence, to protect their own interests, in both; it might require that a child should not by articles of apprenticeship be delivered over to a master, body and soul, without a Certificate of some school instruction. It might refuse to impart the validity of Law to the sacrifice of children. Wherever the State confers privileges,—privileges the exercise of which affect the commonwealth,—the State might require some, at least *primâ*



*facie*, proof of the intelligence necessary to the discharge of the duties they involve. In respect to all those rights which do not belong to personal liberty, but are the express creation of the State, the State might reasonably look for some degree of ostensible security, that they would not be abused. Wherever there were vagrant children, living by peculation and plunder, the State might order their abandoned and vicious condition to subject them to the benignant penalty of an enforced instruction; every beggar in the streets being a forfeiture for the day to the workhouse, or industrial, school. The State might even establish a new qualification for the highest privileges of citizenship, and enfranchise all who could prove their intelligence.—In many ways the Nation, without any wound to liberty, might so mark gross ignorance, as to render all absolute destitution of knowledge and its instruments, a disgrace that could not be concealed.

We have not spoken of the effect of Sunday Schools in reducing the amount of School deficiency. In the northern Counties they are extensively useful, and supported by a noble self-denial and devotion, mainly by teachers who have to abstract from their own scanty leisure the hours given weekly to this high service. Sunday Schools, however, are totally insufficient for the general purposes of Education, and are themselves rendered powerless even for religious instruction unless the children they receive have had their minds previously quickened and expanded by the Day School. Neither religious knowledge, nor religious feelings, can be conveyed into minds unprepared to receive them. The Day School is essential to the efficacy of the Sunday School, and the more highly the influence of the latter is rated, the stronger is the argument for the necessity of that daily training which is the preparation for its lessons. The Examiner Newspaper mentions the case of a clergyman whose Sunday School was raised from comparative inutility into vigorous service by the success of an Evening School undertaken by a Nonconformist gardener in the parish, after the total failure of the Rector's Day School, on which the employments of the children did not permit their attendance. Such facts, prove, what indeed the Ragged Schools have clearly shown, that under a National Education there are many districts in which



Evening Schools must be established, in which, from the nature of juvenile labour, Day Schools are as useless as pictures in the dark, or pulpit-lectures addressed to the absent Sabbath breakers.

Upon the whole, we agree in the result arrived at by the most moderate investigators of our educational wants,—that additional provision is required for about half a million of children. This number will each year be augmented by the *excess* of the numbers reaching the age of five, the first year of School-life, over those of the year preceding. This annual increase will go on for ever, requiring a yearly addition to our School Accommodation,—supposing that the want and the supply were once adjusted and commensurate. It is an augmentation that cannot very accurately be predicted or averaged, because it depends on the general comfort and prosperity of the people. In 1839 there were 28,787 more births than in 1838. In 1842, a severe year, there were only 5,581 more births than in 1841. We have already stated that the average annual excess of births in the six years from 1838 to 1844 was 12,829.

We rejoice to see, from all parties and quarters, an approximation to some uniformity of opinion upon this vital question. The matter was fast coming to a practical inquiry of this kind,—whether the Nation was to spend the national funds in educating, or in punishing. Which is the noblest position for a State to hold towards the children of its People, that of Educator,—or that of Gaoler, Flogger, and Hangman? Shall we degrade the question by asking, which is the cheapest? Is it not more costly to punish crime, than to anticipate it by culture, instead of pests and plunderers providing good citizens for the commonwealth, and augmenting the industrial power of the country?\*

It has been ascertained that among criminals,

\* "In the parish of Battersea during the last year was paid—

Police Rate . . . . .	£837 10 0
County Rate . . . . .	558 6 8

Total . . . . .	£1,395 16 8
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Of this sum at least £1,100 was spent for the prevention, detection, and punishment of crime. Whilst the Annual Subscriptions to all the Schools in the Parish, whether in connection with the Church or otherwise, do not amount to £350."—*Minutes of Committee of Council on Education, 1844, p. 114.*

those whose education is too limited to be of any practical avail form nine-tenths of the whole.—From this vast and solemn question it is a blessed change to see party feelings retiring, and the great interests of humanity, for time and for eternity, regarded for their own sake. Dr. Hook for the Anglicans, the Quarterly Review for the Orthodox Church of England, the British Quarterly for the Orthodox Dissenters, and the Westminster for the most liberal school of politicians, the most radical guardians of liberty,—all give large promise that a Minister would now have less to fear for a wide and comprehensive scheme of National Education from party jealousies and false pretences, than at any other period since the question was first discussed. Without, at all denying that good men, and wise men, may still have faith in the voluntary supply, we confess ourselves in this matter to be of one mind with the Quarterly Review, and to deem its solemn warning not too solemn for the occasion :—

“ We avow ourselves to shrink from the fearful responsibility of arresting the course of national education under any auspices ; we will deliver our souls from this awful weight ; we solemnly remind every one—Tory, or Conservative, or Whig, or Radical ; Economist or Anti-Economist—Churchman or Dissenter—that if by any one act, by any one vote in Parliament, by any suffrage on the hustings, by any rash language in public journals, by any inconsiderate petition, by any party or class, or rank, or sectarian jealousy—they *unnecessarily* impede any government whatever in the amicable advancement of this work ; if they act otherwise than under the most grave, deliberate, well-advised, and dispassionate convictions ; if they are not prepared to make the most generous self-sacrifice of all which is not Christian principle—not what passion may dignify by that sacred name, but what asserts and proves itself to the enlightened conscience as such ;—if it be not Christianity in its vital, absolute essence which is at stake—then they are guilty of imperilling the life of the nation without due cause—at least, of not doing their bounden endeavour to avert that death of anarchy and ruin which may await, if we be not wise in time, this most glorious, this most wonderful people of England.”—*Quarterly Review*, No. CLVI. p. 379.